

THE TRAINING OF CHURCH SCHOOL TEACHERS

(A Model for Pastor-led Biblical Training  
of Church School Teachers  
Using a Form Critical Study  
of I Samuel 17:1-54)

A Professional Project  
Presented to  
the Faculty of  
the School of Theology at Claremont

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Ministry

by  
Marshall Maitland Ketchum  
May 1978

*This professional project, completed by*

Marshall Maitland Ketchum,

*has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty  
of the School of Theology at Claremont in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of*

**DOCTOR OF MINISTRY**

*Faculty Committee*

Ray S. Lierman

Berry Pine Hatten

\_\_\_\_\_

April 7, 1978  
Date

Joseph C. Haugh  
Dean

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It is impossible to recognize adequately all who have had a part in this project, but there are certain persons to whom I owe a special debt of gratitude for their support and encouragement during the period of this study.

The support of my family has been exceedingly helpful and their encouragement is much appreciated, especially my wife, Judy, for those long hours she spent alone while I was busy studying, and for her counsel and advice in the preparation of this paper.

Members of the faculty of the School of Theology at Claremont have been stimulating and their assistance is most appreciated. I would especially name Rolf Knierim for sparking my interest in Old Testament and working with me on the theme of this study, Terry Harter for opening up new possibilities in education, Antony Campbell for assistance in the textual study, and Paul Irwin for encouraging the development of the idea of pastor-led teacher-training.

The congregations of the Tujunga United Methodist Church and the First United Methodist Church of Temple City have not only granted time for this study away from the parish, but have encouraged the development of plans for teacher-training and provided settings for testing the model.

It is my hope and prayer that the investment of so many in terms of interest, counsel, encouragement, and patience will bring forth fruit in improved biblical training for church school teachers.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
Statement of the Problem . . . . .	1
Importance of the Study . . . . .	2
Design of the Study . . . . .	5
Delimitations . . . . .	7
Plan of the Report . . . . .	9
II. THE BIBLE IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHERS AND PASTORS . . . . .	11
The Bible in Christian Education . . . . .	11
The Place of the Teacher in Christian Education . . . . .	20
The Place of the Pastor in Christian Education . . . . .	25
Summary . . . . .	27
III. THE CURRENT SITUATION IN PASTOR-LED BIBLICAL TRAINING FOR TEACHERS . . . . .	29
The Use of the Bible . . . . .	29
Teacher Training . . . . .	34
Leadership by the Pastor . . . . .	38
Analysis of Curriculum Materials . . . . .	40
Survey of Teachers . . . . .	48
Summary . . . . .	54
IV. PREPARATION AND USE OF A MODEL . . . . .	56
Elements Needed in Teacher Training . . . . .	56
Description of the Model . . . . .	60
Preparation for the Use of the Model . . . . .	64
Report of the Use of the Model . . . . .	109
Evaluation of the Model . . . . .	116
V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION . . . . .	119
Summary . . . . .	119
Next Steps . . . . .	121
Conclusion . . . . .	123
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	125
APPENDIX . . . . .	132

## ABSTRACT

This project grew out of an awareness of the need for more biblical understanding on the part of church school teachers, and therefore the problem considered is that of providing better teacher training in biblical understanding.

In order to measure the present situation in teacher training, certain foundational norms were developed including:

- 1) The Bible is a record of past responses to God's action in history and a channel for God's action in the present.
- 2) This view of the Bible implies the use of the teaching method of dialogue.
- 3) The teacher's role is to bring persons together in a relationship with each other and with God so that God is encountered and change takes place.
- 4) This calls for teachers with a strong grasp of biblical content and biblical understanding.
- 5) The pastor should be directly involved in teacher training.

Based on these norms, the present situation was investigated through library research, reports of other studies, a critical analysis of sample curriculum material, and opinions expressed by church school workers, revealing indications of a general lack of biblical understanding, teachers not trained as well as they should be, and pastors generally not involved in teacher training.

In order to deal with the problem, a model was prepared and described, based on the thesis that: Teachers and workers in Christian education in local churches can be helped in their own understanding of the Bible through a pastor-led teacher training program, using

curriculum materials, following the form-critical method of biblical study, and relating this biblical study to the present day and to particular age groups and settings through a dialogic approach to teaching and learning. The preparation for the use of the model was reported, including an extensive form-critical study of I Samuel 17:1-54. The model was used in a local church setting and seminary classroom and the use of the model was reported and evaluated.

The results of the study and use of the model indicate that the model contains certain limitations including: the pastor tends to give too much background material; the teachers need help in areas other than biblical training; the training is limited to one age group; and there is a lack of a comprehensive study of the entire Bible.

Positive values of the model include: the improved relationship between the pastor and teachers; the use of the best modern scholarship in biblical study; the use of the pastor's background and knowledge; the local church setting dealing with specific needs; help given for immediate lesson preparation; teachers growing in personal skills and knowledge.

Through this study, the extent of the problem has been indicated and the proposed model is seen as capable of meeting many of the needs in teacher training in church schools, especially in terms of biblical understanding.

## CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

There appears to be a growing concern over the lack of biblical understanding on the part of church school teachers and workers in local churches. This concern finds expression in many ways and from different sources. Church school teachers ask for more help in the area of biblical backgrounds.<sup>1</sup> The Bible is considered accessible and open to all who wish to study it and yet it is largely unused even by those who are asked to be educators in the local church. As a result, children frequently are uninformed regarding elementary biblical material, to say nothing of the meaning of that material.<sup>2</sup> Adults, searching for a greater biblical understanding, flock to Bible study classes and groups.<sup>3</sup>

It is this concern which lies behind the problem to which this project is addressed. The problem may be stated in the form of a question: "How can church school teachers be better prepared in

---

<sup>1</sup>See the results of an opinion survey reported later in this paper, pp. 51, 52.

<sup>2</sup>Dorothy Jean Furnish, Exploring the Bible with Children (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1975), p. 11.

<sup>3</sup>For example, the Bible Study Fellowship under A. Wetherell Johnson, Oakland, California, draws several hundred adults each week in a disciplined study led by discussion leaders trained by Miss Johnson.

their biblical understanding?" Certainly there are many excellent programs of teacher training both in the local church setting and in the larger setting of Districts, Conferences, Synods, etc. Within the local church schools many well-trained, skilled, and knowledgeable teachers bring their considerable knowledge of the Bible to the classroom in effective ways. Nevertheless, there is still much biblical ignorance on the part of teachers and students alike in many local church schools. Dorothy Jean Furnish says, "Something is wrong with the way the Bible has been taught to children."<sup>4</sup> She goes on to say that teachers complain that Bible units seem difficult to teach; adults plead biblical ignorance; and college professors of religion report "biblical illiteracy" among freshman classes.

The question implies that some solutions can be found. It is the purpose of this project, then, to investigate the nature of the problem of the need for greater biblical training for teachers and to propose a model for training teachers in biblical understanding.

#### IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

The need to find better ways of providing biblical understanding for church school teachers is particularly pressing at this time. The institutional church, particularly the United Methodist Church with which the writer is affiliated, is presently laying much emphasis on the church school, with the improvement of the church school stated as one of the

---

<sup>4</sup>Furnish, p. 11.



quadrennial emphases selected by the General Conference of 1976. This emphasis is timely, if not long overdue, inasmuch as there has been a long decline in church school attendance over many years.<sup>5</sup> It is hoped that along with efforts to improve the church school within the United Methodist Church the training of teachers, especially in the understanding and use of biblical material, will not be ignored.

Teacher training programs and events now being used may be questioned as to their effectiveness and influence inasmuch as relatively few church school workers are involved in training events beyond the local church.<sup>6</sup> A recent "Curriculum Overview" sponsored by the Children's Committee of the Pasadena District of the Pacific and Southwest Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church was attended by less than fifty persons, out of a potential of twelve hundred church school workers who might have attended.<sup>7</sup>

Writers, teachers, and theorists in the field of religious education are expressing considerable concern over the problem of ineffective teacher training and the lack of biblical training for teachers. James Smart speaks of the "strange silence of the Bible in the Church," and contends that while it is still there in "solitary grandeur," the graduates of our church schools in their lack of knowledge and

---

<sup>5</sup>Herron, Bud, "Where Have All the Children Gone?" Circuit West, (August 26, 1977), 3.

<sup>6</sup>Reuben Rivera Batton, "The Training of Church School Teachers: Current Practices in the United Presbyterian Synod of Southern California, With Workshop Designs for Leadership Development" (unpublished Rel. D. dissertation, School of Theology at Claremont, 1973), p. 69.

<sup>7</sup>Journal of the Pacific and Southwest Annual Conference, United Methodist Church, (1977), I, 89.

understanding of the Scriptures indicates something is seriously wrong.<sup>8</sup>

Paul Irwin recognizes the decline in Sunday church school enrollment and attendance over the past decade and refers to some answers given by researchers from a sociological point of view as he says:

We are reasonably certain that the Sunday School flourishes where there are trained and dedicated teachers, a well designed curriculum, parent participation, a concerned church membership, evangelistic outreach, and the full support of the pastor or senior minister. What is given less attention in our anxious reflection upon the church school are the theological foundations of the teaching-learning experience. A curriculum presupposes such foundations, but they are less likely to interest teachers or perhaps more accurately less likely to be understood. Preoccupation seems to be with techniques and resources. Teacher training that is thoroughgoing will include biblical and theological study.<sup>9</sup>

In the introduction to a study of the relationship between the experiential approach to religious education and existentialism, Richard Ford suggests that there is a strained relationship between religious education and theology. He says:

Some educators apparently have resented the raising of theological questions in the field of education. On the other hand, a few theologians, including Paul Tillich, have considered religious education to be nothing more than a study of practical techniques and therefore outside the scope of theology proper.<sup>10</sup>

Fortunately, this separation is being overcome in more recent times.<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup>James Smart, The Strange Silence of the Bible in the Church (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1970), p. 24.

<sup>9</sup>Paul Irwin, "About Thursday" (Unpublished), p. 1.

<sup>10</sup>Richard Ford, "A Comparative Study of the Experiential Approach to Religious Education and Some Aspects of Existentialism" (unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, University of Southern California, 1957), p. 1.

<sup>11</sup>Harold William Burgess, An Invitation to Religious Education (Mishawaka, IN: Religious Education Press, 1975), p. 94.

But the separation has filtered down to the teacher in the church school resulting in the preoccupation with techniques and resources, in turn resulting in the lack of Biblical foundations in much church school teaching.

Moreover, biblical illiteracy is an important problem not because we wish more persons could quote verses, but because through biblical understanding changes may take place in persons as the Word of God comes through the Bible confronting persons in all of the wholeness of their personhood. This, ultimately, must be our concern and our awareness of the importance of this study at the present time.<sup>12</sup>

#### DESIGN OF THE STUDY

In order to deal with the question of this study as outlined above, several approaches and research methods were employed. The results of other studies and the views of writers in the field were researched. This included other works in the fields of biblical theology, Christian education theory, teacher-training theory and method, and related fields. Dissertations, periodicals, and notes from seminary classes were included. Inasmuch as the emphasis is on the development of a model, however, the library research portion of the study is not intended to be a thorough investigation of all possible positions or views.

Samples of materials used in church schools were critically examined and publications of denominational church school headquarters were studied. These materials were selected because of their current use in local churches.

---

<sup>12</sup>Cf. Barth's teaching that the word of God meets us in the written word. John MacQuarrie, Principles of Christian Theology (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1966), p. 403.

Workers and teachers from selected church schools were asked to give their views and opinions regarding training experiences. This sampling of opinions is intended as a partial correction and balance to keep the study from becoming overly subjective both in the analysis of the problem and the proposed solution.

Next, a model was designed, tested, and evaluated as a proposal to deal with the problem of the need for better training of teachers in biblical understanding. This approach was selected for several reasons. The model is specific and therefore immediately usable in actual local church situations for testing and application. Eventually theories must be put into some form or structure and the model suggests one structure in which theories might be implemented. Further, there were local church settings immediately available for the testing of the model and the testing could be carried out under natural conditions. The subject matter of teacher training lends itself more to actual testing of a particular plan, rather than the discussion of ideas and theories. It is hoped that the model is supported by carefully considered theoretical foundations, but the model approach may provide a means of testing the theories.

As a part of the preparation for the use of the model, an extensive study of a biblical text was undertaken, using the approach of form criticism. The textual study may appear to be more comprehensive than is necessary for a periodic teacher-training program, but the study was intended to indicate the importance of a far more thorough preparation on the part of the leader than is normally the case. It was also

intended to indicate whether or not form criticism could be useful in teacher training, and, possibly, discover ways in which form critical methods could be employed by teachers themselves in their own study and preparation.

This research design is intended to provide balance in method and greater validity to the conclusions. This balance is attempted in two ways.

There is a balance between the general and the specific. Research in theories and general approaches is balanced by analyses of specific materials. The theoretical research is intended to prevent distorted conclusions resulting from limited samples, and the specific analyses are intended to show that what is stated in theory may be discerned in actual situations.

Secondly, there is a balance between preparation and experimentation. This is seen at several levels. Preparation for the use of the model included the textual study and preparation for the teacher-training testing of the model. This is followed by the actual use of the model in a typical setting. Also, the actual use of the model becomes at that point an experience of preparation for the teacher, emphasizing to both the leader and the teachers the importance of preparation, experience and evaluation.

#### DELIMITATIONS

Because of the broad scope of the general topic of Christian Education and the training of teachers in biblical meaning and understanding, it was necessary to limit both the topic and the methods of research.

Therefore, the topic is limited specifically to the portion of general Christian education theory which deals with teacher preparation, and teacher preparation is further limited to preparation in biblical understanding. A particular approach to a solution is limited to a specific model which may be useful as a part of a more comprehensive program of teacher training. Further, the model is limited to training with the pastor as the leader and the use of the form-critical method of biblical study.

In terms of research design, there is a limited study of the theology of the Bible and its use in Christian education, and theories and practices of Christian education. These topics are too broad and general for a thorough research here. Their purpose is simply to provide some foundation for the development of the model.

The study of particular materials is limited to a few samples, used with a limited age grouping in the United Methodist Church. However, the samples are actually used in local churches throughout the United States and therefore represent material used in a very large number of local churches.

The sampling of teachers is limited both in number of responses and to those who attended a specific training event. This sampling is intended not as a scientific, statistical study, but a way of discovering the views and experiences of some church school workers and providing a broader base for evaluating present teacher training methods.

The model is tested in only a few settings. However, it is presented not as a final product, but a model in a formative stage, and the

testing and evaluation of the model provide a beginning to further investigation and refinement.

Finally, there is a large degree of subjectivity in this study. Personal observations play a major role as in points of view of the nature of the Bible and its use in Christian education, the analyses of materials, the subjective reporting of the testing of the model, the evaluations of specific uses, and the evaluation of the model itself. Nevertheless, if the project were not largely subjective it might have become little more than a collection of views of others or a description of a model with no indication of strengths and weaknesses.

#### PLAN OF THE REPORT

The report begins with a discussion of certain foundational concepts regarding the place of the Bible in Christian education, including a point of view of the nature of the Bible itself. The role and qualifications of teachers are discussed, especially in relation to biblical understanding, and the role of the pastor in teacher training is considered.

Based on this foundation, the present state of teacher training is investigated along with the ways in which the Bible is used in Christian education, including a report of specific samples both of curriculum materials and teacher opinions and experiences.

Criteria for biblical teacher-training are then proposed, a model is described and a rationale is given for the particular structure of the model. A form critical study of a particular text is given as

a part of the preparation for the use of the model. Finally, actual uses of the model are reported and evaluated and recommendations for future study and use are given.



## CHAPTER II

### THE BIBLE IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHERS AND PASTORS

In order to deal with the question of finding better ways to prepare church school teachers in their biblical understanding, it is necessary to establish basic, foundational positions regarding the use of the Bible in Christian education, and implications for the role of the teacher and the role of the pastor. This foundation provides a norm with which to measure the present situation in teacher biblical training and a foundation on which to build a model as an answer to the problem. This chapter, therefore, considers the questions of: The role of the Bible in Christian Education; the role of the teacher; and the role of the pastor.

#### THE BIBLE IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

##### Historical Perspective

The beginnings of the use of biblical material for religious instruction may be found within the Bible itself. For example, concerning the Shema, the people of Israel were exhorted:

And these words which I command you this day shall be upon your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your children, and you shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Deuteronomy 6:6,7 (RSV).

Similarly, in the wisdom literature of Israel, there are these words:

Hear, O sons, a father's instruction, and be attentive, that you may gain insight; for I give you good precepts: do not forsake my teaching.<sup>2</sup>

This essay in praise of wisdom speaks of wisdom not as something which each individual discovers alone, but is passed on from generation to generation.

Moreover, many of the biblical materials themselves appear to have had as their original intention a very pragmatic purpose; namely, as resources for religious instruction. The letters of Paul were collected and preserved and circulated among the churches. The collections of the sayings of Jesus and narratives regarding Jesus were, at first, circulated in an oral tradition and later written down. As those who had been with Jesus in his historical ministry as disciples began to disappear, the need for a way of preserving the memory of their experiences became apparent. It was considered very important that the narratives and collections of sayings be available for coming generations.<sup>3</sup> The introduction to the Gospel according to Luke reflects this intention and very clearly states the purpose:

It seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, that you may know the truth concerning the

---

<sup>2</sup>Proverbs 4:1-9.

<sup>3</sup>Moule identifies the primary function of the Gospels as apologetic, not liturgical: for the outsider, evangelistic; for the insider, confirmatory. C. F. D. Moule, "The Intention of the Evangelists", in A. J. B. Higgins (ed.) New Testament Essays (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1959), pp. 165-79. Cf. also Koch and the tradition of teaching by the disciples and Paul. Klaus Koch, The Growth of the Biblical tradition (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969), p. 88. Also, Klaus Koch, The Book of Books (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1968), p. 138.

things of which you have been informed.<sup>3</sup>

In the period immediately following the historical life of Jesus, in the primitive Christian church, teaching was strongly centered on Christ. Religious instruction of the catechumenate emphasized conduct and faith.<sup>4</sup> Instruction was intended to lead inquirers to become believers and worshipers of Christ. New converts were instructed in the tenets and practices of the new way.

During the medieval period, the church emerged from the catacombs to become more powerful than the state. Education became education by and for the church. Christian education became church-centered, and the emphasis was on obedience. The church became the authority for announcing and interpreting dogma, and the Bible was either submerged by ecclesiastical authority or made subservient to dogma. One of the earliest theoretical statements on religious education, Augustine's De Catechizandis Rudibus, was a reply to a frustrated religion teacher in Carthage, and deals with such issues as language, the teacher, the student, and the environment. The central concern of Augustine's statement, however, is the communication of the content which Augustine considers almost exclusively the Bible.<sup>5</sup> However, after the demise of the catechumenate in the sixth and seventh centuries, there was little effective religious education until the time of the reformation in the

---

<sup>3</sup>Luke 1:1-4

<sup>4</sup>Henry H. Meyer, "The Place of the Bible in Religious Education" in Abingdon Bible Commentary (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1929), p. 45. Williston Walker, A History of the Christian Church (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959), p. 85.

<sup>5</sup>Harold William Burgess, An Invitation to Religious Education (Mishawaka, IN: Religious Education Press, 1975), p. 22.

sixteenth century.<sup>6</sup>

Protestantism replaced the authority of the church with the authority of the Bible, and made the Bible accessible to the people in the vernacular. Christian education was book-centered. Catechetical instruction was based on the Bible as interpreted by the reformers. Burgess says, "The use of books written expressly to define and defend particular points of view came to dominate religious educational practice."<sup>7</sup> However, doctrinal differences appeared and Christian education became centered on providing support for the creeds and doctrines. The Bible continued to be viewed as infallible and verbally inspired, containing the actual words of God, recorded much as a stenographer might take dictation. Texts became centers of controversy and scriptural foundations were sought to support dogma.

The period of the Enlightenment in the Nineteenth Century saw the emphasis upon reason, and educational theories coming from rationalism resulted in "line-upon-line" explanations and rote memorization. The Sunday School movement, usually considered to have been started when Robert Raikes in 1780 in Gloucester, England, gathered children for study, reached its fullest strength in the 19th century.<sup>8</sup>

With the beginning of the twentieth century, two major influences profoundly changed the role of the Bible in Christian education. First,

---

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 23

<sup>8</sup>Robert Wood Lynn and Elliott Wright, The Big Little School (New York: Harper & Row, 1971). Cf. also Walker, p. 470.

the psychological movement within education shifted the focus from content to the individual and Christian Education became person-centered. Education became experiential, relational, and developmental. The goals were shifted from that of transmitting certain prescribed knowledge or information from one mind to another, to the goal of the development of the whole person toward a progressive realization of the Christian life. Education methods emphasized experiences, the effect of relationships, and the concern for readiness.<sup>9</sup>

Along with this revolution in educational theory, the rise of rationalism in the 18th and 19th centuries brought about a new historical approach to Bible study and interpretation. New questions were asked regarding the historical origins, literary forms, and gradual growth of the Bible. C. H. Dodd, for example, said the Bible is a "history of events in which, and particularly in certain crucial events, we are invited to trace the manifest working of the divine providence."<sup>10</sup> The human element was recognized not just as passive recipients, but active participants. H. H. Rowley speaks of the "divine and human factors woven together in it . . . it is the record of man's growing experience of God, and progressive response to God."<sup>11</sup>

This view allowed for the Bible to be more than history. For

---

<sup>9</sup>Ronald Goldman, Readiness for Religion (New York: Seabury Press, 1968).

<sup>10</sup>C. H. Dodd, The Bible Today (London: Cambridge University Press, 1946), p. 98.

<sup>11</sup>H. H. Rowley, The Relevance of the Bible (New York: Macmillan, 1944), p. 35.

example, von Rad speaks of "her history which Israel herself drew", and he seeks to bring together the picture of Israel's history which modern critical scholarship can uncover, and the view of her history which was constructed out of the faith of Israel.<sup>12</sup>

This historical view of the Bible opened up a wide variety of methods of study, such as redactional criticism, literary criticism, and form critical study. It asks the questions of literary form, relation to thought forms of the day when it was spoken or written, history of the development of the text, genre, setting in life, intention at various levels of development, and structure.

The coming together of these two profound changes has brought us to the present day in which modern historical and critical approaches to the Bible are combined in Christian education with an experiential, relational, and developmental approach to education theory. The resulting combination, while representing major improvements over the past, yet contains some flaws and further investigation and critique of both the present day education theory and view of the Bible may be necessary. This attempt is being made by the school of religious education theorists categorized by Burgess as "Contemporary Theological Approach", and represented by Randolph Crump Miller, Lewis Sherrill, James Smart, and Gabriel Moran.<sup>13</sup> Simply stated, this approach recognizes the continuing revelatory activity of God, and considers the aim

---

<sup>12</sup>Gerhard von Rad, Old Testament Theology (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1962), I, 107.

<sup>13</sup>Burgess, pp. 97-99.

of religious education to establish individuals in a right relationship with God within the fellowship of the church.

### The Role of the Bible in Christian Education

We shall now attempt to arrive at a statement of a view which answers some of the objections of a view of the Bible as primarily historical and a view of education as primarily child-centered.

If the Bible is only a record of the past, while it may provide examples of the experiences of people in the past and suggest that the same experiences may occur today, the effect tends to be largely sterile and academic and not closely related to today's experiences.

Also, if education is primarily experiential, relational, and developmental, the Bible tends to be given a secondary position and is drawn upon as needed to support goals not necessarily coming from the Bible itself. The emphasis is upon methods and techniques and the Bible is used as a resource if it "fits in" to the ideas which may be derived from some other source.

Rather, the Bible may be viewed as not only a record of past responses to God's action in history, but "an Event through which Divine-human encounter is possible in the present."<sup>14</sup> Frances Eastman expresses this "more than history" element in saying: "It is more than a book of information, rules for living, or history;

---

<sup>14</sup>Dorothy Jean Furnish, Exploring the Bible with Children (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1975), p. 28. Cf. also MacQuarrie: "Words are not just dead things. They belong in the existential context of interpersonal communication." John MacQuarrie, Principles of Christian Theology (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1966), p. 405.

it is the account of God's dealings with men and their response to him, the account of God's mighty acts in history which reveal what God has done, is doing, and stands ready to do for men."<sup>15</sup> Bernhard Anderson speaks of this approach as to "stand within the Bible", quoting the phrase from Kierkegaard, that the Bible is "a letter from God with your personal address on it."<sup>16</sup>

Perhaps the imagery of Paul Minear describes this view most dramatically:

It is as if in the theatre, where I am hugely enjoying an esthetic view of life, God interrupts the show with a stentorian announcement: "Is John Smith in the house?" and I am John Smith. And the interruption continues; "Report immediately . . . for a task intended for you alone!"<sup>17</sup>

Thus, the Bible is both a record of the past and a continuing and present channel for the Divine action in present experience.

This view of the Bible, then, indicates the need for an educational method which would enable persons to experience the Divine-human encounter. Lewis Sherrill speaks of religious education as "the attempt to participate in and to guide the changes which take place in persons in their relationships with God."<sup>18</sup>

The method described as "dialogue" seems to be particularly

---

<sup>15</sup>Frances Eastman, "Teaching the Bible to Children", in The Interpreter's One Volume Commentary on the Bible (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1971), p. 1259.

<sup>16</sup>Bernhard Anderson, The Unfolding Drama of the Bible (New York: Association Press, 1957), p. 4.

<sup>17</sup>Paul Minear, Eyes of Faith (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1946), p. 19.

<sup>18</sup>Lewis Sherrill, The Gift of Power (New York: Macmillan, 1955), p. 82.



useful with this view of the Bible. Dialogue can be defined as a communication bringing about a relationship involving interpenetration of persons with each other, enhancing being and becoming, as well as knowing.<sup>19</sup> It is more than a two-way process; rather, it is three-way, including subject matter as well as persons, and in the setting of Christian education, involves dialogue with God through the Bible, as well as dialogue with other human persons.<sup>20</sup> The Divine Presence confronts persons in dialogue in such experiences as need, guilt, predicament, judgment, love, acceptance, mercy, grace, forgiveness, and peace.<sup>21</sup>

Christian education, then, would attempt to keep the insistence upon careful and critical study of the Bible, but also provide settings whereby the Divine action may be experienced in our day. Furnish keeps the balance between these two approaches as she speaks of the need to experience Bible content, to discover Bible meanings, to absorb Bible backgrounds. But she speaks of the Bible being an "Event" in the lives of children because they actually experience it, in addition to hearing about it.<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>19</sup>Lewis Sherrill, quoted by Paul Irwin, "Teaching and Learning as Dialogue in Christian Perspective," (Unpublished), p. 1.

<sup>20</sup>Martin Buber, quoted by Paul Irwin, Ibid.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>Furnish, pp. 101-117.

## THE PLACE OF THE TEACHER IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The view of the Bible suggested above and its use in Christian education has implications for the role and qualifications of teachers. If the Bible is viewed in a literalistic way, that is, "plenary inspiration, whereby the control exercised by the Holy Spirit overruled all human fallibility,"<sup>23</sup> then the teacher's role may be to transmit the content of the words of the Bible to the student in a "handed down" way. The teaching method might involve the type developed by Josef Jungman in the "text-developing method": preparation, presentation, explanation, summary, and application.<sup>24</sup> Emphasis might be on memorization, all portions of the Bible would be equally relevant, and the Bible might be seen as the only resource necessary.<sup>25</sup>

However, if the Bible is viewed in terms described above as a record of responses to God's action in history which can still be experienced today, and if the dialogic approach is suggested, then the teacher's role would be different. The role of the teacher would not involve primarily the transmission cognitively of a body of content from one mind to another. Rather, the teacher would be one who brings persons together into a relationship with each other and with God in

---

<sup>23</sup>John Baillie, The Idea of Revelation in Recent Thought (New York: Columbia University Press, 1956), p. 111.

<sup>24</sup>Josef Jungmann, Die Erhbotschaft und unsere Glaubensverkundigung (New York: Sadlier, 1962), pp. 174-217.

<sup>25</sup>Furnish, p. 30.

such a way that God is encountered and change takes place. Paul Irwin speaks of the Christian education teacher as one who facilitates a learning experience "whereby that which was disclosed of the Divine in the person of Jesus Christ affects change in the value-meaning-behavioral pattern of person-social existence."<sup>26</sup>

If teachers are to fulfill this role, certain qualifications are apparent.

### Understanding the Nature of Christian Teaching

The teacher must have a clear understanding of the nature of Christian education, and the goals and purposes of teaching. It is not enough to have information and knowledge, or be able to use resources. Rather, the teacher needs to think through some of the concepts outlined above.

### Understanding Persons

The approach to Christian education as dialogic calls for teachers who are aware of the Christian understanding of the nature of persons, seeing students as capable of relationship with God and each other, "conscious of individual identity, having a capacity for relatedness and fellowship both with God and with other persons; and a capacity to respond to others--to love,"<sup>27</sup> "not a manipulable

---

<sup>26</sup> Paul Irwin, class notes, unpublished.

<sup>27</sup> Burgess, p. 117, cf. note 91, p. 126.

object, but a self conscious, free and responsible person."<sup>28</sup>

Moreover, teachers need to be familiar with the various stages in the growth of persons.<sup>29</sup> Some caution against too much attention given to emphasis upon development in cognitive understanding, such as Furnish who maintains that children can experience biblical experiences in non-cognitive ways.<sup>30</sup> However, awareness of holistic development and awareness of capacities of persons is necessary. Further, factors of environment, culture, socio-religious context should be considered as a part of the matrix in which Christian education takes place.<sup>31</sup>

### Skill in Methods

Methods should not be overlooked if a teacher is to be able to accomplish theoretical goals and purposes. Knowledge of content and understanding children must be put into practice in a concrete way through some method and the choice of method and the attainment of skills may largely determine the results. Types of learning activities need to be considered, such as the categories suggested by Griggs: "verbal, visual, simulated, or direct experiences."<sup>32</sup> The plan of organization must be considered.

---

<sup>28</sup>D. Campbell, The Task of Christian Education (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1955), p. 96.

<sup>29</sup>Goldman.

<sup>30</sup>Furnish, pp. 93, 96.

<sup>31</sup>Sherrill, pp. 82, 83.

<sup>32</sup>Donald L. Griggs, Teaching Teachers to Teach (Livermore, CA: Griggs Educational Service, 1974), p. 17.

### Knowledge and Understanding of Biblical Content

Education theory, understanding persons, and methodological skill without knowledge of content would leave the teacher ill-prepared to fulfill the role as defined above. There are studies which indicate that persons knowing content but without formal training in teaching methods can produce better results in certain kinds of teaching than "professional" teachers who have had considerable formal training in education theory, skills, and methods.<sup>33</sup>

If the Bible is viewed as a channel for the Divine-human encounter in the present day, then the Bible is the most important resource in the educational process. Lewis Sherrill speaks of Biblical subject matter being introduced as a means of precipitating a personal encounter with, and response to God.<sup>34</sup>

This kind of grasp of biblical content on the part of teachers should come through the most scholarly and advanced research methods. The teacher must consider such questions as: the best text and translation, the literary forms, the tradition history, the historical setting. The teacher needs to be aware of the framework characteristic of the day in which the material was written. The teacher must attempt to understand the original message of the Bible writer, even the

---

<sup>33</sup>Research by Luther B. Jennings, professor of psychology, Occidental College, Los Angeles, California, comparing undergraduate students in teaching situations and professionally trained teachers, indicated students untrained in teaching methods but knowing content produced better results than professional teachers. (From personal conversations with Dr. Jennings.)

<sup>34</sup>Sherrill, pp. 92-118, 174-184.

intentions of the sources at pre-literary oral levels. Otherwise the teacher might succumb to the danger of reading into the Bible conclusions reached from other sources or one's own opinion. This is especially important in dialogic teaching which allows considerable freedom for individual participation and expression.

In addition, the teacher should approach the Bible through the eyes of individual faith. An undue concern over critical problems should not keep the teacher from discovering and being confronted by God through the Bible. Rather, the Bible should be approached in relation to life today and personal experiences relating to the experiences represented in the Bible. Tillich's "method of correlation" is helpful in seeing that revelation may take place in relation to deepest needs, becoming "God's Word" for us in our day.<sup>35</sup>

Many other qualities desired in teachers could be noted, such as ability to use curriculum materials, ability to work with others, participation in the church, etc. Nevertheless, the role of the teacher is crucial and qualities needed extensive, with the knowledge and understanding of biblical content of primary importance.

---

<sup>35</sup>Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), I, 59-65. Cf. also Robinson's concept of "trajectory", i. e. finding an equivalent in meaning in the contemporary situation. James M. Robinson, Trajectories Through Early Christianity (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969).

## THE PLACE OF THE PASTOR IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The pastor's role is frequently overlooked in discussions of teacher training. Locke Bowman points out the irony of the fact that "specialists in Bible and theology are seldom in close touch with the day to day problems of a volunteer parish teacher," adding that some pastors "never take the time to find out what is being taught."<sup>36</sup>

There is a long tradition of the minister-teacher role inherited from Judaism, continuing through the Protestant Reformation. Bultmann saw the setting in life of the synoptic tradition not only the sermon but also the instruction of followers. Of Jesus himself, he observed: "In face of the entire content of the Tradition it can hardly be doubted that Jesus did teach as Rabbi, gather disciples, and engage in disputations."<sup>37</sup> Calvin in the Ordonnances declared that Christ had instituted the offices of pastor, teacher, elder, and deacon. In his preparation of a new catechism and his assumed role as interpreter of the Scriptures, Calvin was directly involved in the educational ministry of the Church.<sup>38</sup> Gerald Knoff points out the need that was felt for a teaching ministry in the Reformation by saying: "When Christians saw all this pretentious structure collapse, (i. e. the Roman Catholic Church), there came a new need for an effective ministry,

---

<sup>36</sup>Locke Bowman, Straight Talk about Teaching in Today's Church (Philadelphia: Geneva Press, 1967), p. 17, 19.

<sup>37</sup>Rudolf Bultmann, "Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition," Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments, quoted by Klaus Koch, Growth of the Biblical Tradition (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969), pp. 87, 88.

<sup>38</sup>Walker, p. 354.

one not only which would administer the Word and the sacraments soundly and preach with evangelical earnestness the free salvation afforded by faith alone, but which would patiently teach the people the differences between the old faith and the new and confirm them in their new freedom."<sup>39</sup>

In the Methodist tradition, coming out of the experiences and work of the university-trained Wesleys, the humble people of England and America where Methodism took root needed the preacher-teacher. Long before Robert Raikes began his first Sunday School, John Wesley in Savannah, Georgia, had established a Sunday School with regular classes.<sup>40</sup> Today, the historic Wesleyan question is asked of those about to be ordained, "Will you diligently instruct the children in every place?"<sup>41</sup> The prescribed reading in ordination is Ephesians 4, where the first century description of the work of the ministry joined pastor with teacher, "some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers."<sup>42</sup>

There are many roles for the pastor as educator, such as supervision of the church school, teaching confirmation classes, enlisting leadership, visiting in the homes, preaching, conducting

---

<sup>39</sup>Gerald Knopf, "The Churches Expect a Teaching Ministry," in Nathaniel F. Forsyth (ed.) The Minister and Christian Nurture (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1958), pp. 13,14.

<sup>40</sup>Nolan B. Harmon, Understanding the Methodist Church (Nashville: Methodist Publishing House, 1945), p. 156.

<sup>41</sup>The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church (Nashville: United Methodist Publishing House, 1976), p. 184.

<sup>42</sup>Ephesians 4:11.



public worship. However, teacher training should not be ignored. If teachers need training, especially in understanding the Bible, in theological understanding, in understanding the Christian view of persons, then the pastor of the local church should be involved in teacher training.

Through teacher training, the pastor may use skills and knowledge acquired through years of formal training. The pastor's influence may be multiplied many times by working through teachers, affecting the lives of many more persons than would be possible otherwise. Through teacher training, the pastor may gain a closer relationship with teachers and come to know them on a personal basis. The pastor may come to know the families and children in the church more intimately through a continuing relationship with teachers. Moreover, the pastor may grow in biblical and theological understanding by being in dialogue with teachers, listening and receiving and working with others in a common search and study of the Bible.

#### SUMMARY

This chapter has set forth a point of view upon which a plan for pastor-led teacher training in biblical understanding may be developed. The Bible can be viewed not only as a record of past responses to God's action, but also a channel for God's present action. This view implies the use of the Bible in teaching through the dialogic method whereby persons experience relationships with each other and with God through the biblical witness. The teacher's role is to enable this relationship to take place within the context of Christian education.

Among the qualifications of teachers, a grasp of biblical content and meaning is of primary importance. The pastor of the local church with extensive training in biblical backgrounds and methods of biblical study has a major role in enabling teachers to grow in their biblical understanding.

Having presented these foundational positions, we now turn to consider the present situation in Christian education, especially in regard to the use of the Bible, teacher training, and the role of the pastor, using the positions presented in this chapter as norms with which to measure the present situation.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE CURRENT SITUATION IN PASTOR-LED BIBLICAL TRAINING FOR TEACHERS

The question stated in the introduction, "How can church school teachers be better prepared in their biblical understanding?" assumes that the present situation is not as it should be. In order to assess the need for better teacher preparation, it is necessary to look first at the way the Bible is used in teaching, then critically evaluate present types of teacher training, and, finally, examine the extent to which pastors participate in teacher training. Specific samples of church school material are examined critically to determine how biblical material is actually being used by curriculum writers. Also, the views of some teachers and workers are reported and summarized. This, then, leads to a statement of the elements needed in a teacher training program.

#### THE USE OF THE BIBLE

In spite of the fact that the Bible is given a prominent place in many areas of our culture and church, there is still a large degree of biblical ignorance. James Smart says, "It is a serious indictment against our Sunday Schools that the period of their rise and expansion has seen a steady decline among Christians of interest in and knowledge of the Bible. . . . The Sunday School quarterlies have, in countless instances, helped to promote the disuse of the Bible. How many persons

are there who, after ten to fifteen years in Sunday School, have a working knowledge of the Bible."<sup>1</sup>

One indication of the lack of biblical understanding is found in the experience of Wayne Rood at the Pacific School of Religion. For three years he has invited students to return to the campus three weeks before the fall term begins in order to read through the Bible with him. He says, "It appears that Protestants tend to know isolated bits from Sunday School curricula and textual preaching, but have little idea of the connections of these bits, and most simply do not know the whole."<sup>2</sup> Dr. Rood reports that Yale Divinity School formerly required an examination in the content of the English Bible which was taken in the senior year and many failed the examination.<sup>3</sup> If those who are in training in a prominent divinity school such as Yale, after several years of concentrated study, continue to fail examinations in the Bible, it is reasonable to suppose that the graduates of the average church school have very little biblical understanding.

Another indication of the large degree of biblical ignorance is the desire of so many for more biblical training. Carl F. H. Henry writes, "The Jesus People, an amalgam of great diversity, did much to

---

<sup>1</sup>James Smart, What a Man Can Believe (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1943), p. 68.

<sup>2</sup>Wayne Rood, "The Bible Read Through", Pacific School of Religion Bulletin, IV: 4, (October 1977), 4.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

surface a growing dissatisfaction . . . and an undeniable hunger for honest answers and valid guidelines as found in the Bible. They contributed to the explosion of lay-oriented Bible study groups that reverberated across the United States (and many parts of the world) and that said, in part: 'The institutional church puts us off. Let's study among ourselves where we are, just the way we are.'<sup>4</sup>

There has been a dissatisfaction with curriculum materials, indicating a hunger on the part of many for more biblical understanding than the materials seemed to be providing. United Methodist lesson materials were accused of not being "biblically based". Much of this criticism was not valid and assumed that if the biblical text was not printed in full in the lesson materials, the Bible was therefore being ignored. However, the curriculum editors believed it was necessary to defend biblical content in United Methodist materials in numerous leaflets and articles.<sup>5</sup>

Another indication of the hunger for more biblical understanding is the issuance of alternate series of materials for children by the United Methodist Church. The new "Exploring the Bible" series is organized around the persons, events, and ideas of the Bible and information about the Bible. Biblical content is usually the starting

---

<sup>4</sup>Carl F. H. Henry, "Restoring the Whole Word for the Whole Community", in James Michael Lee (ed.) The Religious Education We Need (Mishawaka, IN: Religious Education Press, 1977), p. 62.

<sup>5</sup>Cf. "The Bible in United Methodist Curriculum Resources"; "Styles of Teaching and Biblical Content"; "What You've Wanted to Know about United Methodist Curriculum Resources for Children".

point, moving from there to the application.

The present situation in the use of the Bible in church schools is indicated not only by a lack of biblical knowledge and a hunger for more biblical understanding. Methods of using the Bible in church schools vary greatly and need to be critically analyzed.

Memorization as a method has some value as a foundation for later study of meanings, but rote memorization as a method of Bible study is insufficient in itself. If the Bible is considered to be a channel for Divine action and encounter, then knowledge of texts alone without their meaning, or without understanding is of limited value. Knowing the content of a story from the Bible without relating it to the present day prevents the Bible from being a channel for the Divine revelation in our day.

The use of the Bible solely as a record of past history is also of limited value. With the excitement of new discoveries and new information about Bible times, customs, archaeology, and language, many church schools spend considerable time studying such background material as time-lines, descriptions of villages, geography, costumes, etc. This material may become simply an end in itself, rather than a means to the end of discovering meanings, so that children might know more about how to build a Succoth Booth, than the meaning of the Succoth in the past and the relevance for today.

Sometimes biblical material becomes nothing more than a way to illustrate ideas which originate from other sources. Some problem is introduced, and the answer to the problem is found in some general maxim of American culture, followed by a text or a story from the Bible

to illustrate the truth of the maxim. The Bible is used, in this case, only to support some other view which may or may not be Biblical.

At times the Bible is used to add authenticity to the doctrinal position of a particular denomination, which position may or may not be biblically derived. Richard Hanson, speaking from within the Lutheran tradition, speaks of this kind of use of the Bible as a way to "demonstrate the rightness of our denominational beliefs . . . We are not after biblical theology."<sup>6</sup>

A common method of Bible study is to read a verse and ask everyone in the group, "What does it mean?" The implication is that anyone can give a text his or her own meaning and this approach ignores the need to ask what the text itself actually says, in the light of the best scholarship. There is a time in Bible study when personal and individual relevance is sought. In a pattern for Bible study, Paul Irwin says, "We shall proceed hermeneutically, i. e., undertake to extract the intended historical meanings of our text and then to explore their relevance for personal and social existence."<sup>7</sup> Later in the study, Irwin asks, "What personal response does the narrative evoke in us?" But this is far different from beginning with the question of "What do you think it means?"

Methods such as these indicate that a part of the problem is to be found in ways in which the Bible is used as well as the failure of

---

<sup>6</sup>Richard Hanson, "Biblical Theology", in Richard Olson (ed.) The Pastor's Role in Educational Ministry (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974), p. 83.

<sup>7</sup>Paul Irwin, "The Bible and Contemporary Theological Thought", (unpublished class notes), p. 1, 2.

church schools to provide biblical knowledge and understanding.

### TEACHER TRAINING

As indicated in the previous chapter, in order to improve biblical teaching, the teacher must have certain very demanding qualifications and fulfill a very vital role. Obviously, training is extremely important. Locke Bowman says, "There is a time bomb in the Sunday School and that is the lack of trained teachers."<sup>8</sup> James Smart says that persons preparing to teach should have the same biblical, theological and historical foundation as persons preparing to preach.<sup>9</sup> Gabriel Moran insists that theological inquiry must be at the heart of any training program.<sup>10</sup>

At the present time, much is lacking in teacher training. A study by Reuben Batton, conducted in 1973, of the training of church school teachers in the United Presbyterian Church indicated that 57.7% of the teachers in the Southern California Synod did not participate in any Synod training, and 70% did not participate in any cluster of churches training event in the previous year. The study which was based on a survey of about fifty churches indicated that only nine churches had Bible studies during regular meetings of the teachers. It also indicated that recruitment of teachers was based primarily on two

---

<sup>8</sup>Locke Bowman, Straight Talk about Teaching in Today's Church (Philadelphia: Geneva Press, 1967), p. 20.

<sup>9</sup>James Smart, The Teaching Ministry of the Church (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1954), p. 12.

<sup>10</sup>Gabriel Moran, Visions and Tactics (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970), pp. 36-68.



factors: availability and willingness. However, in suggesting a model for orientation training for teachers, Batoon includes nothing which would deal with content or biblical background.<sup>11</sup> This study supports the experience of small participation in United Methodist training events cited in the Introduction of this paper in which slightly over 4% attended a training event in the Pasadena District of the United Methodist Church compared to the potential teachers and workers who might have attended.

There are many different types of teacher training now being used which may now be critically examined. They may be categorized into three types: individual study, in-service training, and training beyond the classroom.

### Individual Study

Most teachers engage in some personal study, if only in preparation for the following Sunday's session. This, of course, has much value since it relates directly to the teacher's need and the immediate task. For some teachers, this kind of study is taken very seriously and extends to careful biblical study, using commentaries and introductions carefully and studiously. However, individual study lacks the stimulation and sharing and relatedness of a group. Further, some guidance is usually needed in biblical study and individual study may fail to use the leadership resources available in the local church or denomination.

---

<sup>11</sup>Reuben Rivera Batoon, "The Training of Church School Teachers: Current Practices in the United Presbyterian Synod of Southern California, With Workshop Designs for Leadership Development" (Unpublished Rel. D. dissertation, School of Theology at Claremont, 1973), pp. 63-68.

### In-service Training

Some of the training opportunities for in-service training include: team teaching, teaching under supervision, serving as a "helping" teacher, observation followed by practice. These training opportunities are usually considered very helpful by the teachers since "learning by doing" is easily remembered and skills develop quickly. The effectiveness may largely depend on the co-worker or the supervisor, however, and there is little actual training in content or background material. The emphasis is upon method and skills which are easily observed. Unless much time is spent before and after the class discussing preparation and evaluating the class, this type of training lacks the more theoretical and foundational elements.

### Training Outside the Classroom

There are many opportunities for training offered by local churches, districts, synods, etc., such as workers' conferences, curriculum overviews, lectures, and interdenominational training schools. These have the advantage of the possibility of better leadership because a larger number of churches take part, and there can be a sharing of ideas from many different churches. However, the farther the training event is located from the local church, the fewer participate. In the survey by Batton, reasons for poor attendance included: distance, time, curriculum used, irrelevant to local needs, poor leadership, lack of interest, training too liberal, previous poor experience, bad publicity, prefer other training, too busy, and cost.<sup>12</sup> These responses indicate some

---

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 69.

of the problems of training events beyond the classroom and beyond the local church. In spite of usually excellent leadership, distance and lack of relevance to particular needs keep many away.

A major weakness of some of the training events described above is the absence of training in biblical background. If teachers need a grasp of biblical content, then the question may be asked as to where this will be found. Individual study normally doesn't involve depth study in biblical background but rather the immediate preparation for the coming session. In-service training deals largely with methods and techniques. Training in overviews and lab schools does not generally cover biblical background. For example, at a recent meeting of the Pasadena District Council of Ministries, held November 17, 1977, a lab school was announced and the topics to be covered included the following: learning theory, use of curriculum material, use of resource materials, planning sessions, tools for the classroom including music, puppetry, games, and audio-visual resources. While all of these may be valuable in training, it is significant that not one of the announced topics could be called content or background, and no biblical background apparently would be given.

In a recent overview, one session had as the main theme, "Discipline", while a session held two months later had the theme, "Curriculum".<sup>13</sup> Overviews tend to concentrate on the coming age-level units. However, in an overview held in November, 1977, the excellent introductory talk

---

<sup>13</sup>Overviews sponsored by the Pasadena District, Pacific and Southwest Conference of the United Methodist Church.

included a resumé of some of the material by Furnish on the way in which the Bible may be used in the church school.<sup>14</sup>

These studies and observations of current training events and opportunities indicate that, while attempts are being made in teacher training, there are serious weaknesses in at least two areas: the lack of participation when the events are held outside the local church, and the lack of biblical content in the training.

#### LEADERSHIP BY THE PASTOR

The problems indicated above in teacher training indicate the need for the development of new methods as well as the improvement of present methods in teacher training both in the local church and beyond the local church. Much of the fault, however, may not lie in present methods, but in leadership. If our concern is with the need for improved biblical understanding on the part of the teachers, it may be that the pastor is the key to this training.

Lynn and Wright report a study in the mid-decades of the 20th century indicating that pastors spend less than 5% of their time on educational work in the church or "little more than they have to give to janitorial service."<sup>15</sup> Edwards affirms that "The pastor is the number

---

<sup>14</sup>Dorothy Jean Furnish, Exploring the Bible with Children (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1975).

<sup>15</sup>Robert Wood Lynn and Elliott Wright, The Big Little School (New York: Harper & Rowe, 1971), p. 97.

one Christian educator in the local church."<sup>16</sup> However, when it comes to suggesting what the pastor can do, Edwards says very little, simply suggesting the pastor should know the teachers and the subjects of the unit to help in pastoral calling and when there is a "unit on faith, teachers would profit from holding the workers conference at a time when the pastor can be present."<sup>17</sup>

At present, for many pastors, involvement in Christian education includes little more than attending Commission on Education meetings where most of the time is spent deciding who will buy the punch for the Sunday School picnic, or holding teacher recognition Sundays, or visiting the classes when the unit is on "People who Help Us," answering children's questions about the work of the minister. Gerald Knopf asks the question, "Is the teaching aspect of the ministry an extra responsibility to be discharged after all the other more central and pressing roles are completed?"<sup>18</sup> If there is a need for more biblical training for teachers, and if the pastor has more background and training in the field of biblical knowledge and understanding than most of the other leaders in the local church, then there is a serious problem when the pastor is not a part of teacher training. A pastor who does not become strongly involved in biblical teacher training may be seriously crippling the educational work of the church.

---

<sup>16</sup> Mary Alice Douty Edwards, Leadership Development and the Workers' Conference (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1967), p. 28.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 45.

<sup>18</sup> Gerald Knopf, "The Churches Expect a Teaching Ministry" in Nathaniel F. Forsythe (ed.) The Minister and Christian Nurture (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1958), p. 10.

## ANALYSIS OF CURRICULUM MATERIALS

We turn now to an analysis of specific samples of church school curriculum resource material in order to determine the way in which the Bible is actually used in specific materials and biblical background and assistance given the teacher. This analysis also will illustrate how lesson materials might be analyzed on the basis of the ideas set forth in this paper.

### Criteria for Evaluating Samples

Before we look at the materials, a set of criteria are suggested as a basis for the analysis. These are largely derived from the previous discussion in this paper. The following questions may be applied: What view of the Bible is reflected in the materials; i. e., literalistic, historical, or past record and channel for Divine action? What background material is provided for the teacher; does the material reflect a scholarly and critical study of the Bible? How is the Bible used in the lesson materials themselves; does the material use the Bible to support ideas coming from other sources? Does the material relate the Bible to today; do the modern applications truly reflect the message of the text; does the relating to today include both thinking and feeling experiences; does the material provide and encourage opportunities for experiencing God today? Does the material reflect an understanding of the nature of persons and age level differences? Is the suggested method the best for the text and age levels?

Analysis of Lesson Materials: "Covenants Old and New"<sup>19</sup>

Materials used. The particular lesson materials selected are a part of a unit titled, "Covenants: Old and New, The Story of the Old Testament." The session titled "Whose Kingdom--God's or Ours?" covers the Books of Samuel in the Old Testament. This particular lesson was selected more or less at random, but it was being used in the Fall of 1977 and thus could be used in the model described later in this paper.

Introductory material. The teacher's guidebook contains excellent articles on biblical background. "Covenant and Peace", by James L. Crenshaw gives a clear statement of the meaning of covenants in Old Testament times. There is a good review of covenant and seals from the time of the Creation, through the covenants with Noah, Abraham, and Moses.

A second introductory article by Maryann J. Dotts recognizes the need for critical scholarship. She says, "The Bible is an account of God being revealed to persons through the covenants. It is also a record of human search for God. The Bible tells of Israel's response to God."<sup>20</sup> She calls for giving attention to the origin of ideas and settings, but also seeing the Bible in relation to today. "It is hoped they (girls and boys) will become aware of the ways God is revealed

---

<sup>19</sup>Maryann J. Dotts, "Covenants: Old and New", Older Elementary Guidebook, II,1; and Older Elementary Student Book, III, 1, (Nashville: Graded Press, 1977).

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., Guidebook, pp. 8,9.

through the making of covenants in the Bible, and how God is continually being revealed to persons today."<sup>21</sup> This statement reveals an understanding of the Bible as a channel through which God still speaks and acts today and calls for a response. The statement also reflects a dialogic approach to Christian education in the phrase: "adults and children together may find God speaking to each one of us."<sup>22</sup> On the basis of the criteria stated above, the background material reflects a view of the Bible as a channel for divine actions and generally reflects a scholarly and critical study of the Bible and the use of the dialogic method in Christian education.

Teacher's guide. The Bible background for teachers has a good section on the emphasis of the biblical materials used. The theme is "Whose Kingdom--God's or Ours?", and the Bible references are I and II Samuel. God's directing is indicated and the weaknesses in David are acknowledged. However, Nathan's courage is emphasized without biblical foundation. The writer of the material makes the application by saying, "It is difficult to know, with certainty, just what the will of God is in a particular situation."<sup>23</sup> The difficulty of knowing God's will is not the central message or thrust of the story, nor is it Nathan's courage, or even Nathan himself. Rather, this story is the announcement of the promise that the Lord will make a house for

---

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 52.



David. The central theme is that the Lord does not desire a house to dwell in, but will "make you a house."<sup>24</sup> "Here the king, who wants to build a house for the Lord, is told that the Lord will 'build' him 'a house'".<sup>25</sup> In the biblical background, the idea of "applying the standards of God's kingdom" is stressed, but this is not brought out in the actual lesson.

Here we see an example of the text and the application not related to each other. It violates the criteria suggested above which asks whether the lesson material uses the Bible to support ideas coming from other sources, as well as the criterion which asks if the application truly reflects the message of the text. If the goal of the writers as stated was to "Help students see the importance of choosing what is right,"<sup>26</sup> then some other text should have been used.

In the section on "Learning Activities", the suggestion is made to review and relate to the rest of the story reflecting good teaching methods. Role play enables the story to be experienced on a feeling level. This idea is supported by the criterion of methods of teaching which include both thinking and feeling, and a method which acknowledges age level differences. However the descriptions of Saul, David, Jonathan, and Nathan stay on a human level, and while the Books of Samuel reflect

---

<sup>24</sup>II Samuel 7:11b.

<sup>25</sup>Hans Hertzberg, I and II Samuel (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964), p. 283. Hertzberg follows L. Rost and M. Noth in this view of the central message of this text.

<sup>26</sup>Dotts, Guidebook, p. 52.

an understanding of Yahweh working through individuals rather than through sudden intervention, it is questionable whether the text itself was intended to describe only the human qualities of these people.

Student's book. The student's book, especially, contains some serious problems. The biblical material covered is such a large portion that it is questionable whether persons in 4th through 6th grade would, or could, deal with the material on anything but a very superficial level. However, the purpose may be to see large blocks of material and put together small sections which may have been learned in the past.

The reference to Nathan especially misses the point of the story. The phrase, "after thinking it over and praying about it"<sup>27</sup> is a very mild description of the powerful words of the text, "that very night the word of the Lord came to Nathan."<sup>28</sup> Something stronger is called for in the text, even though the writers would need to put the words in modern terms.

The most serious problem is the failure to take the message of the Bible story as the theme of the application for today. The Bible story has as its main thrust the promise to David that he would have successors, that Yahweh would give him a house. A subsidiary

---

<sup>27</sup>Dotts, Student's Book, p. 27.

<sup>28</sup>II Samuel 7:14.

theme is that the Lord does not want a place or a location, for He is not bound to one place. Hertzberg sees in this the basis for polemic against temple liturgy.<sup>29</sup> The story actually has very little to do with how one makes a decision. Yet, the student's book has the students imagine they are Nathan trying to decide and the reasons for the decision. Steps in making choices are listed: 1) Discover all the different choices; 2) Ask, what would happen if. . . ; 3) Choose a course of action. Throughout these steps there is very little that has to do with the story. The only reference to deciding what God wills is in the statement: "Remember that God is always on the side of the best choice."<sup>30</sup> It appears that the writer took the story of I and II Samuel and out of the whole sweep of the magnificent account of God working through individuals to help the nation, selected the story of Nathan. Then, instead of seeing the story as a turning point in the whole story of David, the story of Nathan is used to say that one ought to decide what is best. While the attempt is made to bring the lesson close to the experiences of students in the situation of a boy who wants to go swimming, the application seems to be a conflict between a rule and one's personal desires with no relation to biblical guidelines.

---

<sup>29</sup>Hertzberg, p. 285.

<sup>30</sup>Dotts, Student's Book, p. 28.

Summary. The introductory material insists on a careful study of the biblical background, but the particular lesson contains a wide gap between the biblical material and the relation to today. This material illustrates a use of the Bible in Christian education which purports to be biblical because it begins with a study of a particular part of the Bible. However, the application does not follow the intent of the text itself, but, rather, uses the biblical material only as an introduction to a discussion of a different topic. While it may be argued that the topic of decision-making is more appropriate to the experiences of children of this age, if a writer plans to prepare lesson material that uses the Bible as a resource, then the central message of the particular text used should not be distorted. Either a different text should be used which gives insight in making decisions, or an application of the text in II Samuel should follow the message of the text itself.

Analysis of Lesson Materials: "Thank You, God!"<sup>31</sup>

Materials used. This is a session in a larger unit titled, "Giving Thanks to God," used with younger Elementary age children in the Fall of 1976. This material was selected because it was in current use and illustrates the use of the Bible in resources for younger children.

---

<sup>31</sup>Norma Jean Perkins, "Giving Thanks to God," Younger Elementary Children's Book, II,1 (Nashville: Graded Press, 1977).

Student's material. In a very brief introduction to the Book of Psalms, some reflections are found on the story of David as well as the origin of the book of Psalms:

David Thanks God. David was in the fields. He watched the sheep for his family. He took care of the sheep.

When the sheep were resting, David thought about God. He said "Thank You" to God.

Sometimes he thought, "Thank you, God!"

Sometimes he said, "Thank you, God!"

Sometimes he sang, "Thank you, God!"

Sometimes he also played his thank you song on a harp or lyre. David played very well.

Some of David's songs may have been written down. The Psalms in our Bible are songs David's people sang. Some of these Psalms may be songs David wrote."<sup>32</sup>

In this material, a clear biblical description is given of a part of David's career, his relation to God, and his awareness of God's deliverance. It is also a good introduction to various forms of prayer and thankfulness: thinking, speaking, singing, and playing instruments. The foundation is being laid for Source Criticism in saying that "some" of David's songs "may have been written down," and relating the Psalms to "David's people," possibly some actually from David. This kind of faithfulness to the best scholarship even in material for very young children meets the criterion that the material should reflect the best biblical scholarship. In summary, this lesson material reflects good scholarship, deals with forms of worship relating to children, gives help in finding texts, explains unfamiliar words, and encourages the feeling level of happiness, thus relating it to young children and their own experiences.

---

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., pp. 37, 38.

## SURVEY OF TEACHERS

In order to sample the experiences and opinions of teachers and workers in church schools, a questionnaire was prepared and given to about twenty church school workers. In this way, the actual views of teachers regarding their use of the Bible and their experiences in teacher-training events can be learned. Following a description of the setting and the method of evaluating the survey, the sections of the questionnaire are reported with a summary of the findings for that section. Finally, a summary of the entire survey is given with implications for developing a model for teacher-training.

### Setting and Method of Evaluation

During a regularly scheduled Curriculum Overview, held in two locations on Wednesday, November 16, 1977 and Thursday, November 17, 1977, questionnaires were distributed to those in attendance. The Overview was sponsored by the Pasadena District Children's Work Committee with Winifred Hoadly as director. Those attending were from local churches of the Pasadena District of the Pacific and Southwest Conference of the United Methodist Church.

The questionnaires were distributed as people registered and were to be completed and returned during the same evening. A total of twenty were completed and returned. On the questionnaire the respondents were asked to evaluate various items on a scale of one to five with

"one" being "most helpful" or "closest to my view." In order to score the results, the number of persons checking in the (1) column was multiplied by a score of five, the number in the (2) column by a score of four, etc. In this way, the helpfulness of the training was determined reflecting both the number who took the training and their assessment of its value. The respondents were divided into two groups: teachers and team-teachers were placed in one group, and all others were placed in the group called "supervisors." The results are given for teachers, supervisors, and the combined group. The responses are listed in the order of their score and the actual score reported. Following the tabulation of the results, a brief summary is given.

#### Description of Respondents

There were 13 teachers and team teachers, 2 coordinators, 2 superintendents, and 3 Education Commission members. Years of training ranged from three months to thirty years, with the median for teachers as three years and the median for supervisors ten years. Six out of the thirteen teachers had professional experience, but only one of the supervisors had been a professional. Age levels represented were: Nursery 1, Kindergarten 1, Younger elementary 4, Middle elementary 1, Older elementary 5, and youth 1.

Of the persons surveyed, there was an indication that teachers tend to have fewer years experience than supervisors. Teachers had more professional experience, but less experience in the church school. Of the teachers, three out of seven had taught less than one year.

Training Received

Teachers		Supervisors		Combined	
Overview	45	Lab school	18	Overview	57
Personal study	31	Personal study	17	Personal study	48
Lab school	27	Bible study group	15	Lab school	45
Another teacher	27	Overview	12	Bible study group	39
Bible study group	24	Another teacher	11	Another teacher	38
Other study group	24	Dist. workshop	8	Dist. workshop	26
Workers Conf.	22	Supervision	8	Workers Conf.	26
Dist. workshop	18	Conf. with pastor	8	Other study group	24
College or seminary	14	Training by pastor	8	Supervision	18
Non-church group	13	Workers Conf.	4	Training by pastor	18
Supervision	10	College or seminary	3	Conf. with pastor	17
Training by pastor	10	Other study groups	0	College or seminary	17
Conf. with pastor	9	Non-church groups	0	Non-church groups	13
Others	5				

Overview is highest for teachers and the combined group. Few teachers attend lab schools, but of those who attended, the lab school proved most helpful.<sup>33</sup> Since the survey was taken at an overview, this would naturally have a higher score. For teachers, personal study is high in frequency, but not as helpful as other training. However, supervisors put personal study high on the list. Teacher training by the pastor was infrequent. Of those who had this experience, all listed it as "most helpful." Bible study groups ranked high in both frequency and helpfulness. Apparently, lab school is considered most helpful for those who could attend, but overview reaches more and therefore is considered helpful.

---

<sup>33</sup>The scoring combines the factors of frequency of attendance or experience with the value given by the church school workers to the experience. In some instances, the summary indicates the value given only by those who attended a training event or had the experience, as in the case of lab school where those few who attended ranked the experience as "most helpful."



### Role of the Pastor

Teachers		Supervisors		Combined	
Sermons	42	Sermons	19	Sermons	61
Conversations	22	Example	14	Example	35
Bible study groups	21	Conversations	9	Conversations	31
Example	21	Bible study groups	9	Bible study groups	30
Spiritual guide	15	Spiritual guide	9	Spiritual guide	24
Bib. background in		Bib. background in		Bib. background in	
training class	9	training class	5	training class	14
Methods training	4	Methods training	3	Methods training	7

Sermons were most frequently checked by both teachers and supervisors and given the highest score for the combined group. However, of those checking Bible study led by the pastor or example of teaching, these were indicated as more helpful than sermons. Bible background was low in frequency and value for those few involved. The pastor giving training in methods was lowest in all scoring, suggesting that Bible background by the pastor is more helpful than method training.

### Help Needed

Teachers		Supervisors		Combined	
Resources	44	Methods	13	Resources	54
Individual growth	42	Resources	10	Individual growth	46
Bible background	35	Lesson materials	10	Methods	44
Lesson materials	33	Church history	7	Lesson materials	43
Part of a team	33	Part of a team	7	Part of a team	40
Methods	31	Beliefs	6	Bible background	37
Understand child.	27	Individual growth	4	Beliefs	33
Beliefs	27	Understand child.	3	Understand child.	30
Church history	22	Bible background	2	Church history	29

Teachers and groups combined put resources first, supervisors put resources second. Beyond this, however, there was considerable

difference between teachers and supervisors. Teachers placed individual growth and biblical background very high, while supervisors placed them in fifth and last position. Teachers indicate more of a need for Biblical background. Methods were lower on the scale for teachers than for supervisors. Understanding children was low in both groups and the combined score.

#### Source of Biblical Understanding

Teachers		Supervisors		Combined	
Personal study	32	Personal study	14	Personal study	46
Small groups	28	Past classes	13	Small groups	40
Adult classes	26	Adult classes	12	Adult classes	38
Local ch. training	25	Small groups	12	Past classes	32
Sermons	25	Dist. and Conf.	12	Sermons	30
Past classes	19	Sermons	5	Local ch. training	30
Dist. and Conf.	16	Local ch. training	5	Dist. and Conf.	28
College or seminary	16	Interdenominational	3	College or seminary	16
Interdenominational	9	College or seminary	0	Interdenominational	9

In both groups and combined, personal study is highest. But teachers place adult and small groups higher than supervisors. Sermons are in the middle range for both groups. Lowest is training beyond the local church.

#### View of the Bible

Teachers		Supervisors		Combined	
God known today	62	God known today	19	God known today	81
Record of exper.	54	Record of exper.	18	Record of exper.	72
Source book	49	Revelation of God	17	Revelation of God	65
Revelation of God	48	Source book	13	Source book	62
History of events	39	Every word dictated	13	History of events	47
Original revelation		History of events	8	Every word dictated	28
distorted	22	Original revelation		Original revelation	
Every word dictated	15	distorted	3	distorted	25

Both teachers and supervisors put "Book through which God can be known today" as highest, and the combined score put this highest. For teachers, "Every word exactly as God dictated" was lowest, but for supervisors this was tied for fourth place, placing it equal to "Source book," and above "Bible as history." "Bible as history" was relatively low in both groups. Thus, there is a preference for the view that the Bible is more than past history and is relevant for today, although the teachers' view is less literalistic than supervisors.

#### Summary of the Survey and Conclusions

Concerning those who attended the overview and responded to the survey, some directions may be detected. While overview training reached more persons, lab schools were considered most helpful for those who could attend them, and generally group training events were more helpful. In the local church, there was little teacher training reported done by the pastor, but among those who had experienced this kind of training it was considered most helpful and both teachers and supervisors indicated a need for more Biblical training. Pastors were more helpful in giving Bible study than in giving sermons, as far as source of biblical knowledge was concerned. Pastors were considered more helpful in giving biblical background, than training in methods. Teachers indicated a need for more help in content--supervisors wanted more training in methods. In terms of the view of the Bible, non-literalistic views were prominent, but supervisors were slightly more literalistic in their views.

## SUMMARY

In this chapter, the present situation regarding biblical training for church school teachers has been investigated and now may be summarized. A large amount of biblical ignorance is indicated by writers in the field of Christian education, the experience of universities and seminaries being confronted with students without adequate biblical background, the evidence of a hunger on the part of many for more biblical knowledge, and the expression of dissatisfaction with curriculum materials. Methods of using the Bible need to be improved.

Teacher training programs are frequently inadequate, judging from studies of teacher participation which indicate a lack of participation and a sense of inadequate preparation. Present methods of training, whether they be individual, in-service, or beyond the classroom training, suffer primarily from lack of participation and especially lack of assistance in biblical background for teachers. Pastors are not deeply involved in training teachers and spend relatively little time in Christian education in the local church.

As a result of studies of curriculum resources, there was evidence of good intentions in the use of modern biblical scholarship, but the lesson material suffered from a failure to relate the central message of the biblical text to the application for today.

Among the teachers and workers whose views were surveyed, there was an expressed desire for group training events not too far removed

from the local church, an indication that pastors were giving very little biblical background, an expression of the helpfulness of biblical background when it is offered, a desire for more content in teacher training, and the indication that teachers and workers accept a non-literalistic view of the Bible.

On the basis of the needs expressed in this chapter, we can now turn to a consideration of the elements needed in a teacher-training program and then develop a model to meet these needs.

## CHAPTER IV

### PREPARATION AND USE OF A MODEL

In order to meet the needs outlined in the previous chapters and to find a way to provide better preparation for church school teachers in their biblical understanding, a plan has been developed and a model prepared, tested, and evaluated. Before describing the model, however, the elements needed in a teacher-training program are outlined in the paragraphs below. These elements are based on the investigations of the preceding chapters and form the basis of the model.

### ELEMENTS NEEDED IN TEACHER TRAINING

The following elements are not intended to be all-inclusive or considered absolutely necessary in every program of teacher-training. Many approaches to teacher training may include many other features, and exclude some of the elements outlined below. However, based on the present situation in teacher training and the needs expressed by teachers themselves, certain elements in teacher training would be highly recommended.

#### Emphasis on Content and Biblical Interpretation

While training in methods is needed, the survey of teachers indicated a strong desire for background and content. At present there is a general feeling that much more help in biblical understanding is

necessary both for teachers and for the church as a whole. If a teacher knows the subject thoroughly, and has let the biblical message and experience of God through the Bible become very real in personal experience, this will be expressed in the teaching sessions, and the teacher will develop appropriate methods related to the biblical text.

Over a period of time, those involved in the teacher-training sessions will study a variety of biblical material and the teachers will acquire a thorough introduction to the major portions of the Bible. Teachers will be able to deal with questions raised in the class which go beyond a particular topic or idea or information provided in the curriculum material.

#### Use of the Best Biblical Scholarship

The use of the best biblical scholarship is intended to insure that what is taught in the church school is faithful to the biblical text itself and that the best biblical scholarship finds its way into the local church and the local church school. For too long, the seminary and the local church have been far apart in terms of biblical study.

The form-critical approach is especially useful in teacher-training, though not the only method of study which might be used. Literary criticism and tradition criticism both approach the study of the Bible in distinctive ways. Literary, tradition, and form criticism are not mutually exclusive, but interrelated.<sup>1</sup> However, form criticism concentrates on the categories of form, rather than on documents, combining

---

<sup>1</sup>Gene M. Tucker, Form Criticism of the Old Testament (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), p. iii.

this with the historical interest in setting and function. Literary criticism deals with units of the Bible and historic settings in which the writing occurred. Form criticism looks at earlier pre-literary levels. The structural analysis can be especially useful to the classroom teacher, not only in enabling the teacher to discover the main thrust of the text, but facilitating the clear remembering of the story or text for use in the classroom.

#### The Growth of the Teacher in Knowledge, Understanding, and Personal Qualities

Teachers have value as individuals and teacher training should go beyond the purpose of making teachers efficient "teaching machines" who go through the motions and use the right methods. Rather, teacher-training should seek to enhance the total person. As teachers study biblical material they develop skills to use in their own individual study of the Bible.

Moreover, the intention of teacher-training should be to provide a background of knowledge and understanding from which a teacher may draw insights at any time, rather than giving only specific information and techniques to use in next Sunday's lesson.

#### Use of Curriculum Materials

By using actual lesson materials, help is given in teaching particular age groups. Further, by using the material which will be the basis for a coming church school session, the teacher's own learning will be reinforced through repetition. The use of lesson materials in teacher-training provides a demonstration of how the



teacher can prepare for future sessions. In addition, the teacher is shown how to critically evaluate curriculum material and become the master of the curriculum material, rather than being the servant of the material. Using curriculum material makes the biblical study far more relevant to the teacher's task and the goals of teaching than if the teacher-training was conducted along more formal lines of bible study.

### Dialogic Approach

The dialogic method brings together the teachers in a relational, interactive setting not on the basis of a "giver and receiver," but partners in a common task, each bringing special skills and experience. This approach allows for discussion and interaction both on a cognitive and feeling level and may be more conducive to the possibility of the Divine-human encounter through the biblical material.

In addition, the dialogic method used in teacher-training may provide a demonstration of one method of teaching.

### Pastor as Leader

The role of the pastor in teacher-training has already been discussed. The pastor has certain knowledge and skills which are helpful to teachers and yet are not used in the local church as often as they might be. The pastor can build a closer relationship with teachers and become aware of particular needs in the church school.

If a teacher-training needs to have the best leadership available, the pastor would probably be the best trained leader in terms of biblical understanding in the local church. Of course others besides the pastor

have considerable knowledge and training and varieties of leadership should be employed. However, teacher training should be a demonstration of the best biblical scholarship and, for the most part, pastors have had considerable training in this field.

### Local Church Setting

The studies reported earlier indicated that, while excellent training opportunities are held beyond the local church, not as many church school workers take part. The local church setting involves far more teachers, overcoming the problems of distance, time, and a sense of the training not relating to local needs. Churches are of such varied sizes, structures, and persons involved, that a training on a local level can be much more helpful.

The local church setting retains the group training setting which teachers indicated was most helpful. Interaction is possible among those who have more in common than is possible on a district or conference level.

### DESCRIPTION OF THE MODEL

In order to meet some of the needs described above and based on the elements identified as important to a teacher-training program, a model for a pastor-led teacher training program was developed over a period of several years. The model being proposed is not intended to take the place of all other forms of teacher-training, nor is it assumed that the proposed model may be useful in every situation and under all conditions. Rather, the model proposed, after it has been

refined and adapted to local situations, provides a form useful along with others in a comprehensive program of teacher training, and the model supplies some elements usually lacking in many training programs.

The thesis underlying the proposed model may be stated as follows: "Teachers and workers in Christian education in local churches can be helped in their own understanding of the Biblical message and can grow in their skill in discovering and teaching the Biblical message by means of a pastor-led teacher training program, using current curriculum materials, applying the results and using the methods of form-criticism and other methods of Bible study, and relating this Bible study to particular age groups and settings through a dialogic approach to teaching and learning."

### Setting

The teacher-training session is held in the local church at least monthly, and includes all teachers and workers in Christian education in the local church, including those in administrative positions, regardless of the particular age group with which they are presently working. Tables are arranged in a circle with a chalk board available, as well as Bibles, biblical reference books, lesson material currently being used in one of the age groups, and any prepared introductory material provided by the leader.

The pastor of the local church is the leader. This person might be the Associate Pastor, the Minister of Education, the Director of Education, or some other person who provides professional leadership in the local church. The pastor who has responsibilities beyond the area

of Christian Education is preferred in order to relate the Christian Education program to the larger over-all church community.

### Preparation

The teachers and workers are asked to prepare for the session in two ways: 1) reading through the lesson materials to be used, both the student's book and the teacher's guide; and, 2) reading the biblical text announced as the subject of study, using whatever reference material might be available, and looking especially for the principle thrust or main idea of the text, as well as other ideas expressed in the text itself.

The pastor prepares for the session by undertaking a very careful and thorough study of the text, using the form-critical method or some other modern method of biblical study. If the form-critical method is used, this would include: 1) determination of the unit; 2) analysis of the structure; 3) description of the genre; 4) definition of the setting or settings; 5) statement of the intention, purpose, or function of the text; and 6) consideration of the context.<sup>2</sup> This is followed by the attempt to discover hermeneutical implications in terms of the ideas as they relate to today. The pastor studies the lesson materials from which the text is taken to see how the writer used the text. Finally, the pastor prepares questions and plans for the dialogic method of teaching the group, including some investigation of ways in which the text might be used in the local church school with a particular age group.

---

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 11f.

### Plan of Pastor-led Teacher Training Session

The session itself begins with the pastor and the teachers together entering into dialogue with the curriculum material, asking first what Biblical text forms the foundation or background of the particular session to be studied. The biblical material may not be printed, or even referred to in the lesson material, but may be the source of ideas, experiences, or even teaching methods. After the biblical material is identified, the pastor and the teachers look at the text itself, asking questions of the text, carefully listening to what the text actually says. In this process, printed material defining certain terms or concepts, or giving general background information may be passed out to the teachers. The pastor and teachers analyze the structure together, determine the genre found in the text, consider the setting by asking "Who is speaking and who are the listeners,"<sup>3</sup> and asking about the intention and the context.

Next, the question is asked concerning the meaning for the present day and the meaning for the individual experiences of those in the group. The attempt is made to relate the ideas coming out of the text to both the cognitive and feeling levels and to discover parallel ideas and experiences. At this point, it is important to avoid moving too quickly to the application to the students in the church school class. Rather, the individual teachers need to discover the text as a way in which God acts to encounter them in their own experiences and the community relationships of their lives.

---

<sup>3</sup>Hermann Gunkel, "Fundamental Problems of Hebrew Literary History," in What Remains of the Old Testament (New York: Macmillan, 1928), p. 61.

Only after the first two steps have been completed, does the discussion move to the experiences of the students in the church school class and how the text speaks to their particular individual experiences. Finally, the question is asked concerning the methods which might be used in teaching the particular text, including the use of the lesson material and other resources, and, finally, the development of a lesson plan.

#### PREPARATION FOR THE USE OF THE MODEL

In order to test the model described, a pastor-led teacher-training session was planned in conjunction with a teachers' meeting at the First United Methodist Church of Temple City, Temple City, California, in the Fall of 1977. The following is a report of the preparation and use of the model in this specific setting, and a further use of the model in a seminary setting, beginning with the preparation itself. The steps in preparation include: 1) Identification of the text from curriculum materials; 2) Study of the text; 3) Plans and outline for the training session.

#### Identification and Selection of Text

The curriculum material selected for this experimental use of the model is from the United Methodist Church "Exploring the Bible Series," Older Elementary, Fall 1977, unit title: "Covenants: Old and New, The Story of the Old Testament," Session seven, "Whose Kingdom-- God's or Ours?" by David and Martha Ash, revised by Maryann J. Dotts. This is the same material analyzed previously in this paper. This

material was selected because it was currently in use in the Fall of 1977 by the teachers working with older elementary students in the First United Methodist Church of Temple City where the teacher-training session was carried out.

The unit covers the Old Testament from Genesis through Ruth, including material from the Pentateuch, Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, some of the prophets, a few of the Psalms, and the Wisdom Literature. The particular session studied, session seven, covers the books of Samuel.

The curriculum material both in the teacher's guide and the student's book has been analyzed previously. The biblical texts forming the background of the session are portions of I and II Samuel. The story of David and the Philistine in I Samuel 17 is not referred to directly in the material, but the picture in the student's book showing David with the sling is very prominent, and the Story of David's Rise forms a major portion of the biblical background. Therefore, because of the relationship between I Samuel 17 and the Story of David's Rise, which is demonstrated in the study of the text, it was decided to concentrate the textual study on I Samuel 17:1-54. Further, this text contains a narrative which is well known and frequently used in church schools, and thus is especially important to study. Because of the popularity of this text, it has been distorted and misunderstood and a careful study of the text may be helpful in correcting false understandings of the main thrust and basic theme of this text.

## Study of the Text: I Samuel 17:1-54

### Resolving of Tensions in the Text

We begin with the observation that in its present form, I Sam. 17 containing the account of David's victory over the Philistine contains a number of tensions, both within ch. 17 and in the larger setting of parts of ch. 16 and 18. It is also apparent that there is a notable difference between the Vaticanus MS of Septuagint and the Masoretic text of these chapters.<sup>4</sup> The LXX is shorter, omitting the following: in ch. 17:12-31, 41, 48b, 50, and 55-58; in ch. 18: 1-6a~~x~~, 8a~~x~~b, 10-11, 12b, 17-19, 21b, 26b, and 29b-30. The question to be considered is whether the LXX contains a cohesive account in itself, and whether separating the LXX from the omitted material resolves the tensions. We shall look at the tensions in this material and try to suggest their seriousness and, in each case, possible solutions.

#### a). Tensions between LXX and omitted verses within ch. 17.

(1). v. 1 and v. 12. Each appears to be the beginning of a story. V. 1 gives a setting and scene of a battle, describing the location in detail. V. 12 is an introduction of David through his father and brothers. It is possible that v. 12 could simply begin a second

---

<sup>4</sup>Of the three principle MSS of LXX, Vaticanus, Sinaitus, and Alexandria, the Vaticanus is considered the earliest, according to S. R. Driver, Notes on the Hebrew Text and Topography of the Books of Samuel (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), p. xli. LXX is used to designate Vaticanus Septuagint, or LXX<sup>B</sup> in this paper.



scene; i. e., v. 1 introducing the challenger and v. 12 introducing David. But comparing 17:12 with 16:11f raises the question of the introduction of David a second time.

(2). vv. 1-3 and v. 19. The scene of the battle is repeated. In vv. 1-3, there is a more elaborate description, and there is a slight tension between encampment in the valley of Elah, (2a, 19b) or on the mountain with the valley between them, v. 3. V. 2a may be a gloss,<sup>5</sup> but it appears also in v. 19.

(3). vv. 4-11 and v. 23. Goliath's introduction and challenge is repeated. The addition, "same words as before," (v. 23), partially harmonizes the repetition. But the repetition is not necessary.

(4). V. 11 and vv. 24,25. The fear of Goliath comes from what he said, (v. 11), or his appearance. However, v. 23 refers to Goliath speaking and David hearing him. Yet the fear in v. 24 is related to seeing, and not, as in v. 11, to hearing. Also, there seems to be an unnecessary repetition in vv. 11 and 24.

(5). V. 41 and v. 48. The Philistine drawing near David is repeated. However, the first may be intended to introduce the dialogue and the second to introduce the action.

(6). Vv. 40, 41 and v. 48. There is a reversal of action. In 40, 41, David draws near first, but in v. 48, the Philistine draws near first.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup>Simon J. De Vries, "David's Victory over the Philistine as Saga and as Legend," Journal of Biblical Literature, XCII (1973), 24.

<sup>6</sup>Hans Hertzberg, I and II Samuel (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964), p. 153.

(7). V. 50 and vv. 49,51. Goliath is killed by a stone, v. 49-50, but in 51 he is killed by a sword. Vv. 49,51 continue a coherent narrative but v. 50 seems to interrupt the narrative. Especially in v. 50, the inference is that the killing is by the stone, while in v. 51 the sword is specifically mentioned. However, v. 50 may be saying that the victory was actually accomplished by the stone with the use of the sword only a secondary, anti-climax.<sup>7</sup> This is supported by v. 47 where David says the Lord saves not with a sword. In other words, the Philistine was already conquered before David used the sword.

(8). Vv. 32-40 and vv. 55-58. In v. 32f, Saul knows David while in vv. 55-58 neither Saul nor Abner know David.<sup>8</sup> Vv. 55-58 also seem out of place, since the narrative seems to end with v. 54.<sup>9</sup>

(9). Vv. 54 and v. 57. Goliath's head is taken to Jerusalem in v. 54, but in v. 57 it is taken to Saul. V. 54 is especially puzzling since Jerusalem was in the hands of the Jebusites. It may be that the head was brought there later, as Hertzberg suggests, and, if so, could have been taken to Saul first. The reference to the armor of the Philistine taken to David's tent, v. 54, raises the question of David who, as a youth, would probably not have his own tent. Hertzberg's suggestion that the reference is to the tent of Yahweh from which

---

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>De Vries, p. 24; cf. *ibid.*, p. 154.

<sup>9</sup>Hertzberg, p. 153.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

David later takes the sword of Goliath, (I Sam. 21:9),<sup>11</sup> is not a satisfactory answer since the Nob shrine of ch. 21 was probably not a tent, according to the view of De Vries.<sup>12</sup> Rather, the reference to Jerusalem may simply be the "winding up of the story."<sup>13</sup>

(10). V. 39 and v. 50. V. 39 says "David girded his sword," while v. 50 says, "no sword in the hand of David." If David owned a sword, which accords with David as a warrior though a youth, there is no evidence either that he carried it or used it in the battle, which v. 39 would permit.

b). Tensions within omitted verses in LXX, ch. 17

(1). V. 12 and vv. 13, 14. In v. 12, there are eight sons of Jesse, but in 13 and 14, the three eldest are named and David is called the youngest, suggesting only four. However, in 16:10, there are eight sons. ( In I Chr. 2:14, there are only seven).

(2). V. 25 and v. 26. In v. 26, David does not seem to know of the reward of v. 25. He has to ask, "What shall be done to the man" after he has already been told. It may be the arrangement of verses is intended to emphasize that David's motive is not the reward.

(3). V. 16 and vv. 19-30. The events of vv. 19-30 could have taken place in one day, with the distance from Bethlehem to Elah only

---

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 154.

<sup>12</sup>De Vries, p. 33.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

eight to fourteen miles. Yet, in v. 16, the Philistine came forward for forty days. V. 19 suggests that David started from Bethlehem while the men of Israel were in Elah fighting the Philistines, not after the forty days of the challenge of the Philistine.

c). Tensions within LXX, ch. 17

(1). V. 32. David is introduced rather abruptly, having not been mentioned in vv. 1-11. The inclusion of 12-31 gives a full introduction of David. However, David is introduced in 16:14-23 and would be already at the scene of the conflict.

(2). Vv. 8, and 10, 34 and 37, 43 and 44. In these verses, there are repetitions of introductions to speeches; i. e. "He stood and shouted," and "the Philistine said" (vv. 8 and 10). However, the double introduction of speeches may be for emphasis or a different topic of the speech.

(3). There are tensions already discussed above which are found within the LXX, including vv. 2 and 3, encampment on the mountain or valley; vv. 47 and 51, "not with sword" or "drew his sword"; and vv. 33 and 54, David a youth, but having a tent.

d). Tensions between chapter 16 and 17:1-54LXX.

(1). 16:18 and 17:34. In ch. 16, David is pictured as a musician and man of valor, but in 17:34 he is a shepherd, and no reference is made to musical ability. Yet in 16:19, David is with the sheep and 16:18 appears to be a formal pattern used to describe a likely candidate for kingship. Also, in ch. 16:18, 19 there seems to be a tension in that David is not named in v. 18, but Saul in v. 19 sends for David by name. However, v. 18 may have replaced a verse giving David's name.

(2). 16:14 and 17:32-40. In ch. 16, Saul is tormented, but in 17:32-40 he appears normal. However, 16:23 indicates Saul's torment was not chronic, but occasional.

e). Tensions between ch. 16 and verses omitted in LXX.

(1). Vv. 16:14-23 and vv. 17:55-58. In 17:55, Saul does not know David, but in 16:14-23 David is brought by Saul to the court. This is one of the major tensions and is difficult to resolve.

(2). V. 16:23 and vv. 17:7f. In 16:14-23, David arrives at court, but in 17:17 David is not at court, but arrives again from Bethlehem. Thus, there are two contradictory accounts of David coming to the court. V. 15 appears to be an attempt to harmonize the two accounts, but 17:32 could easily follow the end of ch. 16 with David already at court if vv. 12-31 were omitted.

(3). Vv. 16:14-23 and ch. 17. In ch. 16, the reason for David coming to court is to serve as a musician, but in ch. 17, especially vv. 12-31, David brings gifts to his brothers and inquires about their welfare.

f). Other tensions

(1). V. 17:32. Hertzberg raises the question of the propriety of the young David talking to the king about the king's lack of courage.<sup>14</sup> The LXX reads 'adōnī, "lord," rather than 'ādām, "men" in general.

(2). Vv. 17:4, 23. Goliath is named as the one defeated by David,

---

<sup>14</sup>Hertzberg, p. 144.

but in II Sam. 23:19, Elhanan, one of David's men, is named as the victor over Goliath. However, the name Goliath may have been used to describe an unknown or anonymous man, as Hertzberg suggests,<sup>15</sup> and the tradition crediting David with the deed is old (cf. I Sam. 21:9) and David's fame must have come from a deed such as this, as John Bright suggests.<sup>16</sup>

#### g). Conclusions to the problem of tensions

In reviewing the list of tensions, while in some cases there can be solutions given without reference to the difference between LXX and portions omitted from LXX, yet there are far more tensions between LXX and the omitted verses, than within either the LXX itself or the omitted portions. Also, tensions between 16:14-23 and portions omitted in LXX in ch. 17 seem to be more serious than those between 16:14-23 and the LXX in ch. 17, especially Saul not knowing David in 17:55-58 and David's way of coming to the court. This leads to the conclusion that a consideration of the LXX in ch. 17 as a unit in itself would resolve most of the major tensions.

Various answers to the question of how the text came to its present state have been suggested. Eissfeldt attributes differences to sources corresponding to the early narratives of the Pentateuch.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 146.

<sup>16</sup>John Bright, A History of Israel (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1972), p. 188.

<sup>17</sup>Otto Eissfeldt, Die Komposition der Samuelisbücher (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1931), cited by George B. Caird, "The First and Second Books of Samuel," in The Interpreter's Bible, (New York: Abingdon Press, 1953), II, 856.

The theory of Budde of two main sources continuing J and E has been generally discarded.<sup>18</sup> Caird believes the omitted passages were added at a later date, saying it is unlikely there would be "harmonization by omission," and the omitted passages form a continuous story.<sup>19</sup> Also, Sellin-Fohrer suggests that in Samuel, traditions "quite heterogeneous and deriving from various circles have been juxtaposed and linked together."<sup>20</sup> Cross believes the LXX came from a textual tradition at home in Egypt.<sup>21</sup> De Vries believes the LXX is not more original, but rather the Hebrew recession on which the Greek text was based was an effort to improve by omission what was substantially our present Hebrew text.<sup>22</sup> It seems, however, that Caird's arguments are convincing in questioning harmonization by omission, and that the LXX is earlier and superior.<sup>23</sup>

Whichever is earlier, it seems that there were two Hebrew versions circulating separately. One group in Israel wanted to keep the version which is essentially the LXX while the other wanted to include the omitted passages together with the LXX. Each had an essentially cohesive account but with different emphasis and with more inconsistencies in the

---

<sup>18</sup>Karl Budde, Die Bucher Richter und Samuel (Giessen: Richer, 1890) cited by Georg Fohrer, Introduction to the Old Testament (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1968), p. 217.

<sup>19</sup>Caird, p. 857.

<sup>20</sup>Fohrer, p. 218.

<sup>21</sup>Frank Moore Cross, "A Report on the Biblical Fragments of Cave Four in Wadi Qumran," Bulletin of the American School of Oriental Research CXLI (1956), 12.

<sup>22</sup>De Vries, p. 23.

<sup>23</sup>Though Caird's pre-Rostian parallel strands is not largely supported today according to De Vries, Ibid.

larger version. It seems reasonable, then, to consider the LXX in itself as a unit for our study, although it would certainly be possible to make a form-critical study of the Masoretic text of ch. 17.<sup>24</sup>

#### Determining the Extent of the Unit

Is this text a unit? Determining the units in narrative material such as this<sup>25</sup> cannot be accomplished simply by literary criticism, or determination of authorship.<sup>26</sup> Rather, such factors as textual criticism, introduction and conclusion, contrast, scene of action, persons named, complete or incomplete references or connections within or outside of the text, and unity of theme must be considered.

#### a). Textual Considerations

The resolving of tensions by considering LXX separately from MT has already been noted. LXX does not need the verses included in the MT, but, rather, constitutes a cohesive narration in itself, though giving a different thrust and emphasis. There are no antecedents or pronouns without identification in LXX taken by itself. The narration moves smoothly across omitted portions in LXX: Saul's dismay and fear, v.11,

---

<sup>24</sup>The foregoing material dealing with tensions is more detailed than would normally be considered in a periodic study of a text for teacher-training, and much of the material would not be covered in the teaching session. A simple choice of the LXX or MT text could be made with a brief explanation of some of the major tensions. However, this study is intended to give a stronger support for the choice of LXX as the text to study and show the possibilities of a more detailed study.

<sup>25</sup>See later under "genre," pp. 92, 93.

<sup>26</sup>Antony F. Campbell, The Ark Narrative (Missoula, MT: Scholar's Press, 1975), p. 55, footnote 2.



is followed by David's courage, v. 32; David drawing near the Philistine, v. 40, is followed by "And when the Philistine looked and saw David," v. 42. V. 48b is unnecessary to the story. The fall of the Philistine, v. 49, is easily followed by "David ran and stood over . . . ," v. 51 without the interpretive v. 50.

#### b). Introduction and Conclusion

The text is introduced with a battle report and concluded with a battle report, between the same combatants at the same place. Vv. 1-3 provide a clear beginning, giving essential facts of a battle. One difference, however, is that in v. 17:2, there is only "Saul and the men of Israel," while in v. 52 the men of Judah are mentioned, though in v. 53 it is only "Israelites." Nevertheless, the two portions of battle reports enclose a large middle section composed largely of speeches.

V. 17:1 marks a better beginning than the inclusion of 16:14-23 because the battle introduction form and the change of scene of action beginning with 17:1 indicate a definite beginning, although David is somewhat abruptly introduced in 17:32.

Within the LXX there are no major new starts or repetitions. Rather, the narration shows a natural movement: confrontation, challenge, response to challenge, preparation for combat, combat, and consequences.

#### c). Scene of Action

In this text, all of the action takes place at the same location described in vv. 1, 2. In vv. 51-53, the Philistines flee and are

pursued by the men of Israel and Judah to other places, but v. 53 returns the narration to the original scene of action. David takes Goliath's head to Jerusalem, v. 54, but this special problem will be considered later.

#### d). Persons

Throughout the text, the same persons are involved. In the introduction and conclusion, the Philistines and men of Israel are the contestants, though Judah is included in v. 52. In the central section, combinations of Saul, David, and Goliath are included. Contrasts and confrontations are seen in Goliath and Saul, vv. 4-11; Saul and David, vv. 11,32; Saul in verbal contest with David, vv. 32-37; Saul's armor and David's rejection of armor, vv. 38-39; and Goliath and David in verbal contest and combat, vv. 42-51a.

#### e). Conclusion

There are no story threads left incompletd, no pronouns without identification, no syntactical problems such as missing antecedents. Rather, the text is cohesive and complete in itself leading to the conclusion that the text is a unity.

## Analysis of the Structure

### Structural Outline

#### David and the Philistine Champion

I Sam. 17:1-54 LXX<sup>B</sup>

I. Introduction: confrontation of armies	1-3
A. Described by names of places	1-2
1. Philistines	1
2. Saul and men of Israel	2
B. Described by terrain	3
II. Conflict of champions	4-51a*
A. Challenge and response	4-37*
1. Challenge issued	4-10
a. Introduction of challenger	4-7
1). Identity - name and origin	4a
2). Description	4b-7
a). Physical	4b
b). Armor	5-7
b. Speech - challenge	8-10
1). Statement of confrontation	8a,b
2). Challenge to choose a champion	8c
3). Proposal - combat to decide war	9
4). Repetition and intensification of challenge	10
2. Response to challenge - contrast Saul and David	11-37*
a. Fear and acceptance of challenge	11, 32
1). Saul - dismay and fear	11
2). David - acceptance	32
a). Negative - not to fear	32a
b). Positive - accept the challenge	32b
b. Acceptance contested and supported	33-37
1). Saul - David's youth	33
a). Negative statement	33a
b). Reason given	33b
2). David - Yahweh's deliverance	34-37a
a). Prediction of victory	34-36
(1). Report of past victories	34-36a
(2). Prediction of victory	36b
b). Source of deliverance	37a
(1). Report of past deliverance by Yahweh	37aα
(2). Prediction of deliverance by Yahweh	37aβ
3). Saul - commission and blessing	37b
B. Preparation for combat	38-47*
1. Choice of weapons - contrast Saul and David	38-43a
a. Saul's offer	38

---

\* Denotes verses omitted.

b. David's choice	39-40
1). Attempt to wear armor	39a
2). Rejection of Saul's armor	39b
a). Statement of rejection	39b $\alpha$
b). Reason	39b $\beta$
3). Choice of other weapons	40
c. Reaction of the Philistine	42-43a
1). Reaction described	42a
2). Reason given for reaction	42b-43a
a). David's youth	42b
b). David's weapons	43a
2. Pre-battle speeches - contrast Philistine and David	43b-47
a. Philistine's speech	43b-44
1). Introduction - curse	43b
2). Speech proper - prediction of victory	44
b. David's speech	45-47
1). Contrast sources of power	45
a). Philistine - weapons	45a
b). David - Yahweh, defied by Philistine	45b
2). Prediction of victory	46a,b
a). Action of Yahweh	46a
b). Consequences	46b
(1). For Philistine	46b $\alpha$
(2). For host of Philistines	46b $\beta$
3). Purpose of victory - knowing	46c-47a
a). Universalistic - earth know God in Israel	46c
b). Particularistic - this assembly know Lord	47a
saves not with sword	47b
4). Expression of confidence	47b $\alpha$
a). Authority ascribed to Yahweh	47b $\beta$
b). Prediction of victory repeated	48-51a*
C. Report of combat	48a
1. Approach of Philistine	49, 51a
2. Action of David	49
a. Action with sling	51a
b. Action with sword	
III. Conclusion - victory for Israel reported	51b-53
A. Flight of Philistines	51b
B. Pursuit by men of Israel and Judah	52
1. Extent of pursuit	52a
2. Result for wounded Philistines	52b
C. Plunder	53
Appendix - return of trophies	54
A. Head of Philistine to Jerusalem	54a
B. Armor of Philistine to David's tent	54b

### Structure of Parts of the Unit

In the introduction, the confrontation of armies is described by names of places: Socoh, west of Bethlehem, which is on a strong position at the end of a ridge.<sup>27</sup> The attack is from the south through Judah, possibly explaining "men of Judah", v. 52, unlike the three other Philistine attacks described in I Samuel 4:1, 13:5, and 29:1. This suggests Judah had some associations with the Northern Tribe.<sup>28</sup> Saul is mentioned by name, rather than simply Israel, emphasizing Saul as a person for the later contrast with David. The armies are at Elah, the valley of Terebinths, the present day Wadi es-sant, 12 miles west of Bethlehem,<sup>29</sup> the obvious route of advance from Philistine cities to the coastal plane.<sup>30</sup> The confrontation is also described according to terrain in v. 3 to set the stage for opposing armies being able to look down upon the ensuing individual combat, with the Hebrew verbs denoting a continuous position.<sup>31</sup>

The attention changes from the broad sweep of armies to the single individuals for the large central portion of the unit. The battle,

---

<sup>27</sup>Caird, p. 971.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

<sup>29</sup>Hertzberg, p. 148.

<sup>30</sup>Peter Ackroyd, The First Book of Samuel (Cambridge: University Press, 1971), p. 137.

<sup>31</sup>Driver, p. 107.

thus, seems to be intended as a picture or demonstration with larger implications, indicated by the structure of the combat framed by the armies both in terms of terrain, (a valley between two mountains) and the structure of the text.

Goliath of Gath comes out from the Philistines as their "champion", a word in Hebrew meaning "man who fights between the battle lines."<sup>32</sup> In II Samuel 21:19, Elhanan is named as the one who killed Goliath. But the tradition of David coming to Saul's court because of some notable deed is strong,<sup>33</sup> and it is more probable that the name of Goliath became commonly used to describe an unknown man.<sup>34</sup> Also, I Sam. 21:9 from the same source level as this text states that David killed Goliath, the Philistine, in the valley of Elah. Originally, the story may not have named the Philistine, especially since the remainder of the story leaves him nameless except possibly the reference to his origin in 17:52.<sup>35</sup> In the Structural Outline the unit as a whole is given the title, "David and the Philistine Champion" because, for the most part, David's opponent is called the "Philistine" rather than "Goliath."

The description of Goliath largely deals with his armor. The weight and size of the armor are given to show that he was well protected, heightening the emphasis on the defensive nature of his armor. The spear

---

<sup>32</sup>Driver, p. 107. According to Martin Noth, Goliath was of a class of mercenary specialists. Martin Noth, The History of Israel (London: Black, 1960), p. 164, note 2.

<sup>33</sup>Bright, p. 188.

<sup>34</sup>Hertzberg, p. 146. Also Caird, p. 971. However, not according to Noth, p. 180, note 1.

<sup>35</sup>Ackroyd, p. 135.

and javelin are mentioned, but not the sword. The superior quality of the Philistine armor over the Israelite armor is indicated in the description.<sup>36</sup> The challenge follows the description and is given more importance in the narration, because Saul and Israel's fear comes from hearing the words, v. 11, rather than seeing the Philistine. It is in the form of an insult,<sup>37</sup> which is taken up later in v. 45, and a challenge to choose a champion with the understanding that the single combat will decide the issue of the battle of the armies.<sup>38</sup> The insult is to Saul, but not to the God of Israel, though later David takes it to mean defiance of the God of Israel, v. 45.

In response to the challenge, the sharp contrast between Saul and David is seen: fear and dismay, compared to David's courage, which David expresses in two ways, negatively and positively. He says: "Let not my Lord's heart fail him", the LXX more sharply pointing up Saul's own fear, in contrast to MT: "May no man's heart fail." The contrast of Saul's courage in I Sam. 11:6 due to the spirit, and 16:14 when the spirit leaves him is seen here. The clear acceptance of the challenge is expressed as David says, "Your servant will go and fight," though David is still a "servant." However, though a servant, he does what the king should do. The previous withdrawel of the spirit from Saul is beginning to have consequences which are observable in public, (16:14).

---

<sup>36</sup>Ibid.

<sup>37</sup>William McKane, I and II Samuel (London: SCM Press, 1963), p. 110. Literally, "I throw abuse at the ranks of Israel."

<sup>38</sup>Ackroyd, p. 139. Cf. Harry Hoffner, "A Hittite Analogue to the David and Goliath Contest of Champions," Catholic Biblical Quarterly XXX (1968), 220-225. Also cf. single combats in Homer's Iliad, books 3 and 7.

Saul and David are seen again in contrast as Saul protests because of David's youth. Caird speaks of David as too young, as described in 16:14-23.<sup>39</sup> Yet, 16:18 describes David as a man of war. Rather, the factor of the Philistine being a man of war from his youth is the principle difference in Saul's view, rather than David's age. David's answer is expressed in two ways: the experience of victories, and the belief that Yahweh is the source of deliverance. David recalls victories over lions and bears, the word "paw" being the same word used in reference to the Philistine in v. 37. This experience of past victory would seem small compared to the Philistine, but for David, the Philistine is doomed because he has defied the armies of God, and thus the Philistine will be defeated. Two reasons are given: the Philistine is outside the covenant being uncircumcised, and he has defied God's armies, though the second is expressed in a stronger way. This is intensified in the second part of David's answer, with emphasis indicated by the repetition of the speech introduction formula. In this verse, v. 37, David predicts future deliverance because of past deliverance, and the statement may even be called a profession of faith.<sup>40</sup> At this point, the deliverance is still individual, for David himself. Saul then gives the commission to go. Saul is still the king with authority to commission the challenger. He adds a blessing which could mean either: "Lord be with you," or "Lord is with you." However, the blessing is more of a formal statement and

---

<sup>39</sup>Caird, p. 972.

<sup>40</sup>Henry Preserved Smith, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Samuel (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), p. 160.



should not imply Saul's ascribing special spirituality to David. It is an assurance, not a prayer.<sup>41</sup>

A new section follows marked by the change to a largely narrative account, rather than dialogue or speeches, and the content no longer questions whether David should go, but, rather, the decision having been made, how best to prepare. Again, we see a third contrast between Saul and David, the issue being not fear vs. courage, or youth vs. experience and Yahweh's deliverance, but the choice of weapons. Saul offers his own armor, but David rejects the armor with the reason that he is not used to them. Saul's armor includes the helmet and the coat of mail, both defensive and protective. Caird suggests Saul should have known they would not fit David, because of the height of Saul as head and shoulders above others.<sup>42</sup> But David's reason has nothing to do with size, according to the text, but, rather, his not having used this kind of armor. The issue seems to be David's style of fighting and his ability to move easily without heavy armor.<sup>43</sup> Some commentators see this as symbolic of David as the future king, but this is not explicitly stated.<sup>44</sup> Also, the issue is not clearly David's refusal to use any kind of weapon. David is already a warrior, and Augustine misses the point in suggesting that David intended to use the

---

<sup>41</sup>Ibid.

<sup>42</sup>Caird, p. 977.

<sup>43</sup>Smith, p. 161.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., p. 160. Also, Hertzberg, p. 152.

least possible armor: "lightest possible armor, strong in the Lord, not himself, not with steel, but with faith."<sup>45</sup> Also, at this point, the reliance on Yahweh is not mentioned, though it follows in v. 45, contrasting coming with weapons or in the name of the Lord. Thus, the issue is not pro-weapon, or anti-weapon,<sup>46</sup> but the use of methods suited to one's experience and style, while trusting that deliverance comes from Yahweh through the individual. Obviously, David uses weapons. The rejection of Saul's armor is followed by the acceptance of the staff and stones and sling, though there is no other reference to David's use of sling in subsequent battles. The sling was a formidable weapon, and would be more effective without heavy armor and with the ability to move about easily.<sup>47</sup>

The Philistine reaction is placed under the section on weapons in the structure outline because it refers to David's weapons, begins with what the Philistine saw, and is more of a reaction to David's appearance, than a formal pre-battle speech which later begins with the curse in v. 43b.<sup>48</sup> Smith contends that the curse was added because of the Philistine's contempt and v. 43 is a duplicate of v. 44. Yet the two verses express different ideas.<sup>49</sup> In this way of structuring, there

---

<sup>45</sup>A. F. Kirkpatrick, First Book of Samuel (Cambridge: University Press, 1894), p. 160.

<sup>46</sup>Hertzberg, p. 152.

<sup>47</sup>Judges 20:16.

<sup>48</sup>This placement differs from Hertzberg, Smith, and De Vries.

<sup>49</sup>Smith, p. 162.

appears almost a summary of the two issues seen in the contrasts of the former sections: 1) David's youth, recalling Saul's word in v. 33; and 2) David's weapons, recalling Saul's offer in v. 38. "Ruddy and comely," v. 42, recalls 16:12 which is from another setting, yet could be a classic description of David, according to Hertzberg.<sup>50</sup> While it may be argued that David's youth has nothing to do with the choice of weapons, yet in the reaction of Goliath, the weapons are given more emphasis since they are in the words of the Philistine as a speech. Also, joining "youth" with the lack of armor makes the apparent insult to the Philistine more intense.

The pre-battle speeches constitutes the second major topic under preparations for combat and in the structure given major attention. The contrast now is between the Philistine and David, and concerns the question of the source of power. The Philistine begins with a curse by his gods, suggesting a coming conflict of gods, followed by the speech proper, a prediction of victory and the death of David with the added insult of an improper burial.<sup>51</sup>

At this point, the theological nature of the unit comes out most clearly as David replies in four ways: contrast, prediction, purpose of victory, and expression of confidence. The contrast is based on sources of power, "in the name of" suggesting power. For the Philistine, it is weapons alone; for David it is the Lord of hosts.

---

<sup>50</sup>Hertzberg, p. 152.

<sup>51</sup>Cf. Dt. 28:26, Is 18:6, Jer. 15:3.

It is not absence of weapons--David uses weapons--but the power is from Yahweh, a greater power than weapons. The "Lord of Hosts" came to be a proper noun, but the fact that the phrase had to be defined as the "God of the armies of Israel," suggests that at the time of the writing, the term was beginning to lose its literal meaning.<sup>52</sup> At this point in the narrative, the terms "Lord with power," and "God of armies" is stronger than in v. 36, for now the Philistine is depicted as defying God, not just the armies of God. According to Smith, "This day" belongs to v. 45, rather than the MT division of verses, suggesting that it is the defiance that took place "this day," rather than the prediction of victory "This day."<sup>53</sup> This may support De Vries' study of temporal designations serving as epitomizing conclusions.<sup>54</sup>

Next comes the prediction of victory, in contrast to the prediction by the Philistine. This time, it begins with the action of Yahweh, not David, but Yahweh's action is followed by David's action. However, this is not seen as a separate act by David, but a consequence of what Yahweh does. The result, however, goes beyond the Philistine. Whereas the Philistine predicted the death of David, here David predicts the same fate not only for the Philistine but for the host of the Philistines. Thus there is a greater boast, but, more than that, the implications of a single combat for the larger group is beginning to be indicated.

---

<sup>52</sup>Caird, p. 978.

<sup>53</sup>Smith, p. 162.

<sup>54</sup>De Vries, pp. 24-27.

The theological meaning of the entire text seems to be unfolded in the next two verses, answering the question of the purpose of the victory. Both verses refer to knowing: for all the earth, it is to know there is a God in Israel. The emphasis of  $\psi'.$  is on the idea that Israel has a God.<sup>55</sup> One could speculate that this might reflect the Ark Narrative, with the thought of the Lord leaving Israel and then returning with the kingship of David, so that the earth knows that now Israel has a God. For the assembly,  $\text{ל } \text{ק} \text{ א } \text{ל}$ , the cultic assembly, the victory has the purpose that those who already know there is a God in Israel, may also know that the Lord saves not with the sword and spear. Here, especially, the contrast between David and Saul again emerges. Saul is continually pictured as the man of the spear, both here and in the SDR.<sup>56</sup> He is afraid in the presence of the challenge of Goliath, described largely in terms of armor and weapons. Saul contests David's acceptance of the challenge on the basis not of youth but inexperience in war. He tries to clothe David with his own armor. The Philistine echoes Saul in showing disdain for David coming armed only "with sticks." David contrasts the Philistine coming with sword, spear, and javeline, with his own "name of the Lord." Finally, in v. 47, the victory is so that the assembly may know that the Lord saves not with sword and spear. If, then, "sword and spear," are so closely identified with Saul, there could be the inference that the Lord saves not with Saul.

---

<sup>55</sup>Driver, p. 113.

<sup>56</sup>SDR is used to indicate "The Story of David's Rise."

However, the meaning is that the Lord saves, and he does not have to save by means of the sword. Again, it is not pro-weapon or anti-weapon, but who causes the victory. This is supported in the next verse, a final expression of confidence: "the battle is the Lord's," not the battle belonging to who has the best sword, or even the best sling.<sup>57</sup> The first half of the verse even suggests that the Lord is free to do as he wills. In spite of David's confidence that the Philistine will be overcome, yet he leaves the matter to the Lord.<sup>58</sup> Certainly the issue is not, as Toynbee says, the biological competition compared to the conflict between the armoured reptile and the soft furred mammal.<sup>59</sup> Rather, the issue is the saving power of the Lord and who is Lord of the battle, and who gives the Philistine into David's hand.

The combat itself is narrated as a kind of denouement as the Philistine approaches, David acts, and the Philistine falls. The MT, v. 50, creates a tension which its omission in LXX resolves. David does use a sword, probably his own, in contrast to Hertzberg's statement, "God had done his work without a sword in the hand of his chosen instrument."<sup>60</sup> Yet, the issue is not whether one ought to use a sword, but who saves and the instrument through whom he saves.

---

<sup>57</sup>Not as Hirsch says, expounding the story in the light of the Book of Judith. E. Hirsch, Das Alte Testament und die Predigt des Evangeliums, (1936), pp. 33-49, cited by Hertzberg, p. 152, note a.

<sup>58</sup>Smith, p. 163.

<sup>59</sup>Arnold Toynbee, A Study of History, abridgement of vols. I-VI (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947), p. 331.

<sup>60</sup>Hertzberg, p. 153.

For the conclusion, the scene now shifts back to the armies, thus justifying the ending of the large central section in the outline. The action moves swiftly, there is no dialogue, but simply a battle report without comment or interpretation, except to give the reason for the flight of the Philistines. Men of both Judah and Israel pursue the Philistines and the extent of the pursuit and the fall of the wounded and the plunder of the camp indicate the extent of the victory.

The last verse is considered an appendix because it returns to David again with the curious reference to Jerusalem, then in the hands of the Jebusites. However, the relic could have been brought to Jerusalem later, though Hertzberg's comment that it is related to Golgotha seems mere speculation.<sup>61</sup> The armor, however, is taken to David's tent, not the tent sanctuary of Nob, and the writer winds up the story specifying the imaginary repositories for the trophies.<sup>62</sup>

The conclusion is not just a "wrapping up" of the story, but, like the introduction, surrounds the individual combat with the larger group--the armies of the Philistines and Israel, much as the armies camped on the mountains surrounding the valley of single combat. Thus, in the conclusion there are social consequences of the individual event. What Yahweh did through David was not for David alone, but for all Israel. One small pronoun at the end of David's speech adds support

---

<sup>61</sup>Hertzberg, p. 153, note b.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., p. 154.

to this conclusion. In v. 37, David speaks individually "The Lord who delivered me . . . will deliver me." However, in v. 46, David speaks first individually, "the Lord will deliver you into my hand," but then in v. 47, "he will give you into our hand." The issue now is not David's survival as an individual, but the Lord bringing deliverance to all Israel through David and, we might add, through David rather than through Saul.

### Structure as a Whole

This unit is characterized by the pattern of a battle report in its overall structure. There is a building of tension through a crisis, followed by resolving the crisis. However, within the outer shell of the battle report found in the introduction and conclusion, the central drama takes place in the theological statements found in the speeches prior to the combat itself, first between David and Saul and then between David and the Philistine. The combat itself is not emphasized nearly as much as the dialogue. Moreover, the central drama set within the context of the armies camped on opposite hills with a valley between them, suggest that what happens in the valley is not an isolated event, but has larger implications for the armies and the people they represent. Thus, the structure indicates that what Yahweh does through David, concerns all of Israel and not David alone.

Within the central section, there appear to be two basic themes: 1) the contrast between Saul and David; and 2) Yahweh as deliverer through David.

Saul and David are sharply contrasted after the challenge is issued in terms of fear vs. courage, experience vs. youth, and armor vs. rejection



of armor. The disdain of the Philistine, vv. 42-43a, reinforces the two previous arguments of Saul, that David is too young, without experience, and that David does not use heavy armor. Thus, even in the reaction of the Philistine, Saul and David are shown in contrast. David's pre-battle speech again takes up the anti-Saul theme as David says, "The Lord saves not with sword and spear," which was Saul's method. Even as the combat takes place, and the Philistine is overcome, and the men of Israel and Judah pursue the Philistines, no mention is made of Saul. David, alone, is named.

The theme of Yahweh as deliverer through David appears in progressive intensity in David's speeches. At first, v. 32, David simply agrees to fight, with no mention of Yahweh. Then, in v. 36, the Philistine will be killed because he has defied the armies of God, with "armies" placed before "God." A stronger statement follows that "the Lord" will deliver David, moving from a "cause and effect" rationale in v. 36, to a more direct action of Yahweh in v. 37. In the attempt to use armor, the Lord is not mentioned, but in David's pre-battle speech the trust in deliverance of Yahweh in contrast to the sword is expressed in strong terms. In contrast to Goliath coming with a sword, David comes in the name of the Lord of hosts. Then, in v. 45, instead of the Philistine being accused of defying the armies of God, now it is "God of the armies," with the word "God" placed first. The purpose of victory goes beyond the personal deliverance of David himself, v. 37, and becomes a way for the whole earth to know there is a God in Israel. Thus, the dramatic movement is from one man's survival to implications for the whole earth, and a knowing through this event on the part of the cultic assembly, that the Lord delivers, and the

deliverance is not in the way of Saul, i. e., with the sword, but through David himself: "he will give you into our hand," v. 47.

The text weaves together these two themes so that they almost become one. Saul's fear and David's courage are not simply to contrast characteristics of two persons as persons, but the implication is that Yahweh is with David, not with Saul. This is never explicitly stated, but in the speeches, David is the one who speaks of trust and deliverance of Yahweh, never Saul. Thus, the difference and the contrast between David and Saul may be a way of saying that Yahweh is with David as deliverer of Israel, rather than with Saul.

#### Genre

The text is generally identified as a legend, in that it is a narrative primarily concerned with edification. It is not a myth because it takes place in the real world and is associated with historic characters. It is more than a story because the attention is on a particular aim, rather than concerned with arousing and resolving a tension.<sup>63</sup> It is more legend than saga, reflecting a more highly developed literary consciousness, more "spiritual" in tone, and does not glorify a "hero" as it's primary purpose. Rather than David being a hero as an example for others, the text bears witness to "the power of Israel's God" expressed through David.<sup>64</sup>

De Vries distinguishes I Sam. 17:1-54LXX as a legend, compared

---

<sup>63</sup>D. J. McCarthy, "Notes on Narrative Genres," from the files of the Old Testament Form Critical Project, (unpublished).

<sup>64</sup>Tucker, p. 38, 39.

to the hero-saga of the remainder of the verses in ch. 17, suggesting it could be called a modified holy-war narrative, moving from peril to victory.<sup>65</sup> However, it is not a genuine holy-war narrative, and is best considered simply a legend, or possible a legend with messianic characteristics in the theme of Yahweh bringing deliverance through an individual.

Within the text, there are various forms: battle reports, narrative story, speeches, interpretive comment. Also, a definite theological understanding is expressed in the speeches, i. e., vv. 37, 46b-47. It has been called a devotional legend, with David as witness and confessor, and there are strong messianic themes throughout the text.<sup>66</sup>

### Setting

Hertzberg calls attention to the frequent mention of weapons, and the final place where the weapons were deposited as clues to the setting, suggesting the tent sanctuary at Mizpah.<sup>67</sup> But this assumes the "tent" in v. 54 is the tent-sanctuary which is doubtful. De Vries notes the theme of glorifying Yahweh as the God of battles and thus the text may be aimed at contrasting secularism in military circles, thus identifying the setting with the Northern prophets.<sup>68</sup> Caird speaks of

---

<sup>65</sup>De Vries, p. 33.

<sup>66</sup>Aage Bentzen, Introduction to the Old Testament (Copenhagen: Gad, 1952), p. 240. Cf. also the messianic theme in Rolf Knierim, "The Messianic Concept in The First Book of Samuel" in F. Thomas Trotter (ed.) Jesus and the Historian (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1968), pp. 34-36.

<sup>67</sup>Hertzberg, p. 147, 154.

<sup>68</sup>De Vries, p. 34.

an early and later source, placing this text with the early source, relating it to II Sam. 21:19, an early source passage.<sup>69</sup> The best we can do at this point is to agree with Caird rather than Hertzberg's uncertain "tent sanctuary" theory, or De Vries too close identification of this text as a holy-war narrative, and consider the setting as very early and to be understood as a part of the composition of SDR, although the oral tradition comes from an earlier time. The close tie to the SDR will be indicated later under the topic of the relation to other units.

### Intention

The text appears to be a legend to serve the function of demonstrating Yahweh's deliverance of Israel through David, rather than Saul. This comes from observing the structural analysis, especially the pre-battle speech of David, where the intention of the narrative, as much as the battle victory, may be "that the earth may know there is a God in Israel and this assembly may know that the Lord saves not with sword and spear," vv. 46, 47. "David's appearance is nothing else than to procure the self-manifestation of Yahweh."<sup>70</sup> Also, the structure with the central theological material sandwiched between the larger perspective of armies indicates that what Yahweh does through David is done for all Israel, and thus David is justified as now the one through whom Yahweh saves, rather than Saul, Saul being the rejected messiah and David the new chosen one confirmed through the victory.

---

<sup>69</sup>Caird, p. 857.

<sup>70</sup>Knierim, p. 35.

## Relation to Other Units

We turn now to consider the text in its larger context in relation both to the immediate context, as well as the SDR as a whole, and to try to discover its purpose, place, intention, and theological understanding when viewed from this larger perspective.

### Relation to 16:14-18:13

Confining ourselves to the LXX, what is the next larger unit surrounding this text, (I Sam. 17:1-54 LXX)? In v. 17:32, David is already at Saul's court without being introduced. Though there are tensions between 16:1-13 and 16:14-23, ch. 16 provides an introduction of David to the court of Saul. Vv. 1-13 are not necessary to this introduction, although they contain the account of the anointing of David which precedes the public confirmation through victory, much as the anointing of Saul (I Sam. 10:1) was followed by Saul's victory over the Ammonites (I Sam. 11). In 16:1-13 David is unknown but not in 16:14-23, and 16:1-13 is from a later tradition.<sup>71</sup> There are prophetic elements also in 16:1-13 in "coming from the sheep" as a formula of a deliverer and the prophetic anointing. Also, 1-13 depicts David as a young shepherd, while 14-23 calls him a man of war.

Further, 16:14 explains in part the question of Saul's fear, 17:11, as the departure of the spirit from Saul, and if 16:14 marks the beginning of SDR, the leaving of the spirit of the Lord would be a natural beginning, even a statement of part of the theme. This leaving of the Spirit of God

---

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., p. 47, note 23.

is directly related to the terror of God falling on Israel. V. 18 appears to be an introductory formula, and David is described as one who overcomes Saul's torment, thus immediately placing David and Saul in contrast.

How far can the unit be extended beyond 17:54? Ch. 18:6 has David's return and the song of the women, with Saul's beginning opposition. Contrasts are visible between 16:14-23 and parts of ch. 18: Saul's love for David is turned to displeasure, his peace is turned to fear, suggesting that the middle section is the reason for the change. The opening verses of ch. 18LXX relate to ch. 17 with the women's song following David's return, and Saul's reaction related to their song. However, vv. 14-16 of ch. 18 are clearly interpretive and concern events beyond the immediate preceding narrative, and seem to be a bridge, or even an introduction to be further unfolded in the remainder of SDR, giving the material of SDR in three sentences: David's success, Saul's fear and awe, and the love of all Israel for David. Therefore, we conclude that the unit ends with 18:13, with 18:13 serving as a recognition of David by the people, and even by Saul as the new instrument in the deliverance by Yahweh.

Putting together the material in 16:14 to 18:13, we have three blocks which could be outlined as follows: 1) the spirit departs from Saul and David is introduced, 16:14-23; 2) a demonstration of Yahweh's deliverance of Israel through David, rather than Saul, 17:1-54LXX; and 3) the recognition by the people of David, rather than Saul, as the one confirmed by Yahweh and the instrument of Yahweh's deliverance, 18:1-13LXX. These three blocks together constitute a portrayal of the emergence of David as the one through whom Yahweh delivers Israel.

Relation to The Story of David's Rise

In terms of the relationship between I Sam. 17:1-54LXX and SDR, I Sam. 17:1-54LXX may be considered a programatic introduction to the larger unit of the SDR. By programatic introduction, we mean a unit which introduces a larger block of material by presenting within the unit the major themes of the larger unit, though in a compressed and compact form. It is a prospectus, a presentation of what is unfolded in more detail. It might be termed a "microcosm" in the sense of being a small world essentially of the same nature as the "macrocosm." It is like an epitome, or an abstract, or a condensed account of a larger literary work which would be typical of the whole. It is like an overture to an opera, containing most of the major musical themes to be heard later.

In order to support this thesis, the following would have to be demonstrated: 1) that the smaller unit is a part of the larger unit of the SDR; 2) that I Sam. 17:1-54LXX constitutes an introduction; and 3) that it contains most of the themes developed in SDR.

Is 17:1-54LXX a part of SDR? Gerhard von Rad gave formation to the idea of SDR as a story in itself, defining the unit of SDR as I Sam. 16:14 to II Sam. 5:12, saying that it sets out the way followed by David first in the service of Saul, then in the service of the Philistines, and finally as king over all Israel, portraying the anointed in all the frailty of human nature.<sup>72</sup> So also Rendtorff agrees with von Rad, though

---

<sup>72</sup>Gerhard von Rad, Old Testament Theology (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1962), I, 308.

asserting that most of the narratives in SDR could have had an original independent existence. But he sees the story itself as a unit, again, from 16:14 to II Sam. 5:12, and formed by the narrator collecting narratives, legends, historical stories, and adding some interpretation and comment.<sup>73</sup> SDR is best concluded at II Sam. 5:12, which forms a concluding comment, effectively summarizing the thrust of the entire narrative, with David established as king of both Israel and Judah. II Sam. 5:12 refers to the past and relates not to the immediate past sections, but to the entire story. What follows is not as directly related to David's rise to power, but, rather, the beginning of David's reign.

The beginning of SDR must be set at I Sam. 16:14, rather than 16:1 for the reasons stated above. In 16:14-23, David is introduced to Saul's court, whereas the material preceding is of a different concern, namely, the theological comment on the rejection of Saul.

Without attempting a detailed structural outline, the blocks of material in SDR include:

I. Introduction, programatic	IS 16:14-18:13
II. The Story of David's Rise proper	18:14-II S. 5:12
A. Interpretive introduction	18:14-16
B. The Story	18:20-II S. 5:12
1. David at Saul's court	18:20-20:42
2. David as a fugitive and outlaw	21:1-26:25
3. David with the Philistines	27:1-31:13
4. David becomes king	IIS 1:1-5:10
C. Conclusion	IIS 5:12

---

<sup>73</sup>R. Rendtorff, "Beobachtungen zur altisraelitischen Geschichtsschreibung anhand der Geschichte vom Aufstieg Davids," in Hans Walter Wolff (ed.) Probleme Biblischer Theologie (Munich: Kaiser, 1971), pp. 428-439.



This outline simply delineates the major blocks in the entire story, but it is to be noted that there is an interpretive comment as an introduction in 18:14-16 and a similar conclusion in II Sam. 5:12, and that in the conclusion, the narrator's comment is that: 1) the Lord had established David as king; and 2) it was done for the sake of Israel. Also in the introduction a similar theme is found: 1) David's success; 2) the Lord is with David; and 3) all Israel and Judah loves David. Conversely, Saul stood in awe of David, and though still the anointed king, would be replaced by David.

It must be concluded that 16:14-18:13 including 17:1-54LXX is necessary to the remainder of SDR, for without it, there would be no introduction of David or statement of how he came to Saul's court and the reason for the beginning conflict between Saul and David.

Is 17:1-54LXX a programatic introduction? There are many types of introductions, such as character introduction, and introduction of the tension of a story. However, a programatic introduction must contain the major themes of the larger unit. If the text of I Sam. 17:1-54LXX was not an introduction, it could be omitted or placed somewhere else without affecting the narration. It is necessary, however, as indicated above to introduce David to the story, to explain David's sudden arrival at Saul's court, and to give a reason for the growing conflict. Moreover, it is highly theological in David's speeches suggesting something more than simply another episode in SDR.

A third question must be asked to support the thesis that I Sam. 17:1-54LXX is a programatic introduction: Are the major themes unfolded in SDR? As a result of our analysis of I Sam. 17:1-54LXX, we concluded that the major themes are: 1) the contrast of Saul and David; and 2) Yahweh as deliverer through David, rather than through Saul. We must ask if these themes are continued throughout SDR.

First, differences in themes may be noted. In I Sam. 17:1-54LXX, David is without as many apparent faults and is more idealized, acting in a noble manner, while in SDR David appears as a leader of a band of outlaws, an extortioner, fighting on the side of the Philistines, dishonest in making false reports to the Philistines, and showing weakness in allowing Abner to be killed. However, in ch. 17 David's youth is emphasized and the thrust of the chapter is not to idealize David, but to show that Yahweh works through David. In SDR the story itself does not consider David's actions wrong, in contrast to the Succession Narrative, i. e. David and Bathsheba. Thus, while David is not idealized in SDR, neither is he rebuked.

In ch. 17, there is no apparent indication that David is to become king, whereas in SDR there is a progressive movement toward kingship and the apparent climax finds David as king of both Judah and Israel. However, some intimations of kingship may be found in ch. 17, as in Saul clothing David with his armor and the head of the Philistine brought to Jerusalem. The main thrust of SDR, however, is not primarily how David became king, but, rather, the work of Yahweh in choosing to deliver Israel through David rather than Saul. The issue is not kingship, but Yahweh's action.

Another problem may be that in ch. 17, David experiences no failures, no reverses. He is victorious over the Philistine. In SDR, however, he becomes a fugitive, is persecuted, and almost killed, has to go over to the Philistines, and becomes almost an outlaw robber to stay alive. However, the issue is not the circumstances around David, but Yahweh's action in all kinds of circumstances. David's life is spared both in the combat with the Philistine and in the conflict with Saul. In SDR his successes increase and are correctly summarized in II Sam. 5:10: "David became greater and greater."

While there are apparent differences in themes, there are far more similar themes, which may now be noted. The theme of Yahweh as deliverer of Israel through David, rather than Saul, is unfolded throughout the SDR. David is increasingly supported and praised by Michal, Jonathan, the priest at Nob, a growing army, Abigail, and finally he is given the kingdom. His courage and trust in Yahweh are seen in contrast to the progressive deterioration of Saul, who descends from the point at which the Spirit of Yahweh departs, 16:14, through fear, jealousy, anger, alienation from Jonathan, killing the priests, consulting a witch, and finally death. This is not to say that Saul may be evaluated simply on a psychological basis. His fear comes from his rejection and is understood theologically.<sup>74</sup> David survives even through the period of alienation and exile and achieves victories even against great odds. Those who oppose David suffer consequences, even as the Philistine suffered for defying Yahweh. David does not seek for power and the kingdom is given

---

<sup>74</sup>Knierim, p. 35.

to him, rather than his grasping for it. Through it all, Yahweh acts through David who, nevertheless, is obedient to Yahweh. David inquires of Yahweh and follows Yahweh's instructions and the frequent "Yahweh with David" attests to Yahweh as the source of power. Finally, what Yahweh does is not for David alone, but for all Israel, as Abner reports Yahweh saying: "By the hand of my servant David, I will save my people Israel from the hand of the Philistines, and from the hand of all their enemies," II Sam. 3:18. This word from Yahweh could just as well apply to the narrative in ch. 17 as to the entire SDR, demonstrating that the thesis can be supported, namely, that the unit of I Sam. 17:1-54LXX is a programmatic introduction to the SDR, containing the basic theme that Yahweh is deliverer of Israel through David, rather than through Saul.

### Theological Implications

#### Implications for Israel

Throughout this paper, it has been asserted that for Israel, the narrative in I Sam. 17:1-54LXX affirms that Yahweh is deliverer of Israel through David, rather than through Saul. David is given confirmation as the chosen one of Yahweh to replace Saul. Just as through David, the army of Israel overcame the army of the Philistines as a result of individual combat, so David is the individual through whom Yahweh will deliver Israel from all enemies. Further, in the strongly theological pre-battle speech of David, the victory of David over the Philistine will show to all the earth that Israel has a God, and will define further how God acts; i. e., not with the sword and spear but through individuals who in trust in Yahweh offer for his use whatever skills they may have.

The emphasis is on the confidence that Yahweh saves and delivers, rather than the manner of deliverance. Further, Yahweh is free to act as he wills, for "the battle is the Lord's." Those who oppose the chosen one of Yahweh will suffer the consequences of having defied Yahweh himself. Yahweh acts through David, even through the weakness of David. Thus, Yahweh acts not so much by sudden intervention, but through orderly processes, through history, and through individuals. Finally, the victory and eventual kingship of David comes not through David seeking it, but as Yahweh's choice and through Yahweh's direction of historical events.

#### Implications for Today

Many misinterpretations of the meaning of this narrative have clouded present day understanding, setting up David as a hero to follow in terms of human courage, using the story as an anti-military polemic, advocating complete passivity in facing enemies without using one's own particular skills in the service of God, David being small in stature and thus not able to wear Saul's armor, and example of a truism that the "armed reptile is overcome by the small furry animal."

Rather, the theological implications for today would include an understanding that God acts through individuals, and that while God may manifest himself through persons and events in history, it is God who acts and God who delivers. There may be times of inquiring of the Lord in which guidance may be given, but deliverance comes not through material or military strength, but in confidence trusting in God acting to deliver through individuals. The messianic theme is thus evident for as Yahweh delivered Israel through David as the anointed

and chosen one, so God delivers through the messiah whom Christians name as Jesus Christ. David in a representative capacity fights and gains a victory which benefits Israel. In a similar motif, Christ work is "for the many" (Mark 14:24, Romans 5:15, etc.).<sup>75</sup>

Regarding the understanding of the nature of persons, we are both social and individual--social in that the action of the individual may bring social consequences--individual in that God works in and through the individual. Qualities such as fear or courage are not primarily personal characteristics in the naturalistic sense, but related to the withdrawel or the presence of God or His Spirit, as in the Spirit of the Lord departing from Saul, and Yahweh with David. In relation to God, mankind's part is trust and complete obedience and the recognition that victory is God's action through the individual and not a human accomplishment. There is the imperative so to act and obey that through us God may bring deliverance to others, that the earth may know there is a God, and that he saves. Further, there is the imperative so to trust that the heart may not fail, and that though we be without armor, the battle is the Lord's and He will deliver in His way. Finally, there is the invitation to discover in Jesus Christ one who was anointed, who received the spirit, who was obedient "even unto death" (Phil. 2:8), who confessed and manifested God to the world, who was confirmed as the one through whom God delivers, and who was exalted as "the name which is above every name" (Phil. 2:9).<sup>76</sup>

---

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., p. 44.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid.

### Plans and Outline Questions for the Training Session

Having given a detailed study of the particular text to be used in a teacher-training session, we now turn to consider the other preparations necessary prior to the training session itself. While the major emphasis in preparation on the part of the pastor should be the study of the text itself, a plan must be developed to lead the teachers into a greater understanding of the text and its use in the church school. This involves both the preparation of the teachers prior to the class and the plan for the session itself.

The teachers were told that the topic for study would be the unit on "Covenants: Old and New, The Story of the Old Testament," Session seven. Those who were currently teaching this unit were asked to study the teacher's guide and student's book. Everyone was told to read carefully the text of I Samuel 17:1-54, using whatever reference materials were available.

An outline was prepared, largely in the form of questions, with the intention not of using every question, but as a way of being prepared to encourage dialogic participation. The basic plan was to ask the questions: What did it mean? What does it mean today in our experience? What does it mean in terms of the experience of persons in the fourth through sixth grades? What is the best way to teach it?

The following is the outline prepared, based on the lesson materials selected and the text of I Samuel 17:1-54.

## I. Introduction

- A. Purpose: Understand the biblical background of this unit and especially lesson 7.
- B. Method: During this training session, we will use lesson materials, and ask these questions regarding the biblical text:
  - 1. What did it mean?
  - 2. What does it mean today?
  - 3. What does it mean to children in the class?
  - 4. How shall it be taught?

## II. Look at lesson materials.

- A. What is the theme of the unit as a whole?
- B. What are the desired outcomes?
- C. What is the theme and purpose of lesson 7?

## III. Study of the Text: Story of David and the Philistine, I Sam. 17:1-54

### A. Look at the entire text as a whole.

### B. Problem of tensions within the text.

- 1. Introduce the two forms of the story: Greek Septuagint and Masoretic text, giving something of the background and purposes of the different texts.
- 2. Read through the whole chapter and note tensions and apparent inconsistencies.
- 3. List some of the tensions.
- 4. Now read through the LXX version as a separate story.

### C. Analysis of the text.

- 1. Unit. Where does the story begin? Where does it end? Is there an introduction, a conclusion? Does the scene of action change? Are new persons introduced?
- 2. Structure: What are the major blocks in the story? If it were dramatized, where would the separate acts begin and end? Outline together the major divisions on the chalk board.
- 3. Detailed study and dialogue within the text.
  - a. Introduction. Where did the confrontation take place? How is it described in different ways? Why is the description given in different ways?



## C. Analysis of the text (Continued).

b. Conflict: How does the text change? How is single combat related to the armies? What does "Goliath" mean? What is most prominent in the description of the Philistine? Why? What is the actual challenge? What is the response of Saul? What caused the fear? What is David's response? Contrast Saul and David? What answer does David give to Saul's objection? Why was Saul's armor rejected? Did David refuse to use all weapons? What is the reaction of the Philistine to David? How does this relate to the contrast of Saul and David? Compare the speech of the Philistine and the speech of David. Outline David's speech. What does David's speech indicate about the purpose of victory? What is the source of the victory? Compare David's role and the Lord's role. Summarize the contrast between Saul and David. Compare Saul and the Philistine. Is the issue "How the Lord saves," or "Whether the Lord saves?" Why is so little attention given to the combat itself?

c. Conclusion: How does the scene change? How is the style different? What is the theological purpose of the conclusion. Compare vv. 37, 46, 47 in the use of pronouns and consider the purpose of the victory as survival of David or deliverance of Israel through David. Why isn't Saul mentioned in the conclusion?

3. Structure as a whole: How would you diagram the structure? What is the outer framework? What is within the framework? Trace the progressive intensity of the theme of the Lord as deliverer through David.

4. At this point, what is the main idea of the text?

5. Genre. What kind of writing is this? Is it story, myth, legend, poetry, theological statement, combination?

6. Setting. What indicates the setting where the story was told or written? Who told it or wrote it, where, and to whom?

7. Intention. What was the purpose of this story in its original setting? What is its purpose as it stands, based on the text itself? Why was it important to the first listeners or readers?

D. Context: How is this text similar or different to other parts of the story of David?

IV. Meaning for Israel: What are some of the themes in the story which were a part of Israel's faith?

V. What is the meaning for Today?

A. What experiences do we have which are seen in this story? How are we like Saul? How like David?

B. What are the major theological themes which relate to today?

1. Distorted views? David a hero to follow, militarism, smallness is more powerful.

2. Views from text?

VI. How is this related to children?

A. What are the experiences of older elementary children which are similar to the story? Fear, too young, doing it all without God, self-centeredness, doing something for others, letting God work through life.

B. How would you tell the story in children's language? What words would you change? What concepts would you clarify?

C. What questions or activities would help in understanding the story?

D. How would you prepare a teaching plan, using the curriculum material and other resources and activities?

E. How would you evaluate a teaching session?

## REPORT OF THE USE OF THE MODEL

Local Church Setting

The following indicates what happened during the session in the local church, followed by a brief evaluation of the session. Ideas given by persons in the teaching session are reported as accurately as possible, but since there was no actual tape recording of the session, they may be distorted. The first person singular form is used in the report referring to the writer as the pastor-teacher.

Introduction. I began by saying that this kind of teacher-training is being developed as a way of helping teachers gain a better understanding of the biblical background to the lesson materials. I indicated that we would be asking three basic questions about the biblical texts: "What did it mean?" "What does it mean today?" "What does it mean for children?" Also, we would suggest ways to teach it. I then passed out copies of the lesson materials and together we looked at both the teacher's guide and the student's book. I asked the group to suggest what they thought was the biblical text behind the lesson material, and their response was that it was generally about David, Saul, Nathan and the stories in I and II Samuel. We noted the picture of David and suggested we look more closely at I Samuel 17.

Study of the Text. I began by saying that there were several forms in which this story was told, and on the chalkboard I drew a map of Israel and the Mediterranean Sea, pointing out the location of Alexandria where the Old Testament was translated into Greek around 280 B.C., by about

seventy scholars, thus giving this translation the name "Septuagint". There was another form of this story found in the Masoretic text, a later form in the Palestine area. The Greek text omits certain verses, especially the large section of vv. 12 to 31 of chapter 17. I asked the group to look for any specially confusing parts of the story where it didn't seem to fit together, and then suggested that by looking at the story omitting verses 12 to 31, the story seems more coherent. It could be told without the section dealing with the arrival of David to the court of Saul.

I then asked the group to suggest the main outline of the story, and on the chalk board they concluded with a basic outline as follows:

- I. Introduction
- II. Conflict
  - A. Challenge and response
  - B. Preparation
  - C. Combat
- III. Conclusion

We talked together about some of the details of the story.

In discussing the importance of Goliath, the first reaction was, "He was big," but with a closer look, we discovered that most of the verses dealt with his armor. In discussing Saul's response, we put a chart on the chalkboard comparing Saul and David. In dealing with Saul's challenge that David is too young and David's answer, they listed the reasons as: "experience, defying the Lord, and the Lord will deliver." Again, in dealing with the section on Saul's armor, the contrast between Saul and David was recognized. Later, we saw the contrast between David and the Philistine. Finally, we asked about the purpose of the whole battle and concentrated on the words regarding "the earth may know there is a God in

Israel, and the Lord saves." We looked at the change in David's words through the story from the personal "I" to "the Lord." At the conclusion, we noticed the "sandwich" construction. Someone in the group made the observation that as David got closer to Goliath, he talked less about himself and more about the Lord.

Meaning for Today. The central idea which seemed to come from the discussion was that the Lord will win, and will act through David for all Israel. Other ideas included: David represents Israel, David was doing it for God, an example of faith, the battle is the Lord's. I asked what it says about persons and some of the responses were: the Lord is with us, there are Goliaths in our lives, there is fear, the value of positive thinking. Someone asked, "Could the battle have been lost?" Some said, "Yes, if David didn't have faith." Others said, "No." We discussed what would make the difference. Verse 47 says the battle is the Lord's and thus the Lord could do what He wanted. However, David didn't sit back and leave it to the Lord. Thus there is the combination of "Lord as deliverer" and David being obedient to the Lord.

Meaning for Children. I asked, "Should this story be used with children, and if so, how? What experiences do children have which are like this?" Some of the answers were: "They are young like David, what they do affects others, they have their fights, they can have faith in God, they have fear and courage, they can learn to use what they have."

I suggested someone in the group might try to tell the story as it should be told to a three year old child. Most hesitated and didn't want to try. One of the group began: "This is the story of David and Saul-- I mean David and Goliath." I asked, "Why did you say 'Saul'?" Could it

be a story of David and Saul? Who are the main characters in the story?

One of the group told the story this way: The armies of Israel and the Philistines were facing each other. The Philistines sent out a giant, twice as tall. He had heavy armor. He said, "Send me a man to fight. If he wins, we will serve you. If I win, you will serve us." Saul said, "Let's get out of here." David said, "I'll fight the giant. I've overcome lions and bears, and I can beat him." Saul tried to get David to wear his armor, but instead David picked up some stones, some pretty ones. As he got closer to Goliath, he called on God to help him. He said, "I will win so that all the earth will know God, and that the Lord doesn't need a sword." So David put a stone in his sling and threw it at the giant and the giant fell. All the Philistines ran away with the people of Israel chasing them.

I asked the others to evaluate the telling of the story. Comments included: It has to be short; make it entertaining, you don't have to say he cut off Goliath's head. I said, In telling the story, go through this process first, outline, get the main point, then tell it with that in mind.

Evaluation. Immediately following the session, the following evaluation was made. I noted that there was an awkwardness in explaining the LXX and yet it provided a chance to inform teachers of the process of translation and the meaning of LXX. One person made the comment, "I have always wondered what 'LXX' meant." The outlining may have started too soon. It probably would have been better to work through the text a little more before beginning the outline. The chart contrasting Saul and David was very helpful in checking our progress as we went along.

There was much that was done in the way of background information

as the session proceeded, rather than attempting to give it all at the beginning, such as the location of Socoh and the meaning of the name of Goliath. There was a smooth flow in the outline from the text analysis into the questions of the meaning for today.

In terms of relation to the children in the class, the telling of the story provided a good summary and review. It also gave the teachers practice in translating biblical concepts into children's language.

Throughout the session, there was animated discussion and much participation. However, I had the feeling that there was too much "question and answer," and not enough genuine dialogue.

#### Seminary Classroom Setting

Several weeks after using the model in the local church, a demonstration of the use of the model was given in a seminary classroom setting. The class, "Pastor as Educator," was taught by Terry Harter, and was being given at the School of Theology at Claremont in the Fall of 1977. There were about ten students together with the professor.

Introduction. I began by giving some of the purposes of this approach to teacher training, emphasizing the need for biblical understanding on the part of the teachers and the importance of the pastor meeting with teachers on a regular basis. I indicated that we would be asking three basic questions regarding the biblical text: "What did it mean?" "What does it mean today?" "What does it mean for children." I then passed around sample copies of the lesson materials and asked the group to discuss what they thought was the biblical text which formed the background of the lesson materials.

Study of the Text. The class had been asked to read through the text prior to the session. I began by calling attention to the Septuagint text as compared to the Masoretic text, suggesting that we look at the story in detail according to the Septuagint text. Using the chalkboard, together we outlined the text and at the same time kept a record of contrasts between Saul and David. Questions were asked which I had not intended to deal with, but were answered because of the extensive background study which had been made. After working through the text in detail, we summarized the outline and noticed the "sandwich" construction with theological material inserted in the speeches found within the narrative of the conflict.

Meaning for Today. The main thrust of the narrative was related to the present day by asking the question: "What experiences do you have today which are like those in the story?" Some of the answers given were: fear, courage, facing obstacles, doing it your own way.

Meaning for Children. Some said they believed that children would not be able to comprehend the theological meaning, but would see the story simply as a fight. The question was discussed regarding the way in which the main ideas of the story could be taught to young children, or whether it should be attempted at all. The session ended with suggestions of methods to use, such as drama or games in using this story with children in the church school.



Evaluation. Members of the class were asked to evaluate both the plan for teacher training and the way in which it was demonstrated. Some of the points made during the discussion involved the need for more dialogue and less "question and answer." The session seemed to be too much on the verbal level, without enough involvement on the part of the entire group. It was suggested that some printed material could be prepared prior to the class giving background material and defining some of the terms in order that the discussion might move more rapidly at the beginning.

It was helpful to give careful attention to each verse and look carefully to avoid distortions and to avoid reading into the text ideas that aren't there. At the same time, it was suggested that more attention might have been given to the larger context of the text, showing the relation to the Story of David's Rise.

Some questioned the amount of time given to the detailed study of the text, time which might be used more effectively in the discussion of meaning for today and meaning for children. Generally, however, the group thought the method was helpful and could demonstrate how teachers could carry out their own personal biblical study. It was also suggested that a pastor might use the text studied in the class as the basis for preaching, thus giving an added opportunity to relate the text to the present day as well as relating the church school to the total life of the church.

## EVALUATION OF THE MODEL

After making an extensive study of the elements necessary in a teacher-training program, and developing and refining a plan for a pastor-led teacher-training program, the model has been used and a report and evaluation given of the use of the model. We now come to evaluate the model, based on the experience of its use as well as general observations of possible dangers and values. We shall look at the model first in terms of the problems which might be involved.

### Negative Evaluation

The model contains the possibility of the pastor flooding the teachers with more background material than they need for their immediate use in the classroom. Pastors may be tempted to give all the information gained from their intensive study which may or may not be helpful in understanding or interpreting the text. Pastors may tend to assume the role of the authority rather than letting the teacher develop skills and contribute insights. The dialogic approach is not easily acquired.

Teachers need help in many other areas of their teaching. Methods should not be overlooked. Teachers need help in understanding the theological teachings of the church, the nature and history of the church, social issues, missions, personal devotional life, ethical decision making, etc. The curriculum materials cover all of these areas and many more, and there is the danger of so much emphasis being placed upon the

basic texts that the interpretation of these texts in many areas of life is neglected.

There is the problem of starting with the curriculum material which relates to only one age level. This requires those who are working with other persons of different ages to attempt to apply the discussion to their particular age group. Because of this, the pastor may not give enough attention to the lesson materials themselves or how to use them as resources.

Finally, by using specific texts from lesson materials, the teachers may not see the relationship of various texts or receive a systematic and comprehensive understanding of the over-all message of the Bible.

#### Positive Evaluation

Though there are problems and dangers in the use of this model, there are many positive values. Through the experience of pastor and teacher talking together, good relationships are established, pastors learn of teachers' needs and problems, and teachers receive the benefit of the education and experience of the pastor in studying biblical texts, giving the teachers an opportunity to learn a large amount of biblical material over a period of time, enriching their own lives and their teaching.

This method has the advantage of a local church setting, dealing with specific needs, not separating teachers into age groupings but enabling teachers to gain from dialogue with each other and the pastor. By using actual lesson materials which are used in the local church,

the teachers are helped with their immediate task of preparation and by using their learning the next Sunday, their understanding is reinforced. Teachers are given examples of methods of Bible study and learn how they may approach other texts on their own.

Finally, through this plan, more and more persons with whom the teachers work will gain a growth in biblical knowledge and the faith and life experience which can come from this knowledge and understanding.

## CHAPTER V

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This study began with an awareness of a concern for more biblical understanding on the part of teachers in the church schools and the statement of the basic problem to be considered: "How can church school teachers be better prepared in their biblical understanding?" In this chapter we review the steps which have been taken in an attempt to answer the question, giving a brief summary of the main points of the paper, and conclude with a suggestion of the next steps to take in continuing to address ourselves to the problem and refining the model which was proposed.

## SUMMARY

After stating the basic problem, certain foundations were established with regard to the questions of the role of the Bible in christian education; the role of the teacher; and the role of the pastor. It was suggested that the Bible can be understood as both a record of past responses to God's action in history and a channel for God's action in the present. This view suggests the teaching method of dialogue understood as a communication among persons resulting in a relationship in which persons grow in their being as well as their knowing. The teacher's role is to bring persons together into a relationship with each other and with God in such a way that God is encountered and change takes place. This calls for teachers with many qualifications, but

especially having a grasp of biblical content and understanding biblical concepts. The pastor should be directly involved in teacher-training, especially in biblical and theological background.

Based on these foundations, the present situation was investigated and three areas of the problem were studied. First, there are indications of a lack of biblical understanding. Second, teachers are not being trained as well as they should be, especially in biblical material, as indicated by the lack of participation in training events and teachers expressing the need for better training. Third, pastors, by and large, are not directly involved in teacher-training. These conclusions were supported not only by writings in the field and other surveys, but by an analysis of curriculum materials and a sampling of views of some teachers and workers.

Based on the study of the problem, a list of elements which are needed in teacher training programs was given. A model was proposed and described in an attempt to meet the needs outlined. The thesis behind the model was given as follows: "Teachers and workers in Christian education in local churches can be helped in their own understanding of the biblical message through a pastor-led teacher-training program, using curriculum materials, following the form-critical method of biblical study, and relating this biblical study to the present day and to particular age groups and settings through a dialogic approach to teaching and learning." This thesis was then carried out in a proposed model which was then tested. The preparation for the use of the model was reported including an extensive and detailed study of the text of I Samuel 17:1-54, and the use of the model was reported and evaluated both in a local church setting and a seminary classroom setting.

As a result of this study, it can be concluded that the problem of the need for more biblical understanding is real, and the proposed model has the capacity to meet many of the needs outlined in the study. As stated earlier, there are many approaches to teacher training and one method cannot encompass all the needs. However, the particular model described in this study has much to commend it to serious and consistent use in the church school.

#### NEXT STEPS

This study and the development of a model and the use of the model must be understood as only the beginning in an attempt to devise a plan which may be useful in a local church. It should be considered as only a "first draft" and needs to be tested further, changed, and evaluated over a period of time. Some of the next steps may be indicated.

A more accurate way of evaluating the results and effectiveness of this or any other plan needs to be devised. Evaluation is difficult in the area of Christian education. However, a more careful testing of teachers and students before and after the use of this model would be helpful.

A series of form-critical studies could be made of representative biblical texts as a demonstration to pastors of ways in which they may use the form-critical method in biblical preparation. This could include sections on experiences of children which relate to the particular texts. This material could form the foundation for a resource for pastors using this method of teacher-training.

Leaders in denominational structures in the field of Christian education could be informed of the basic elements of this method and its value in teacher-training. The Pasadena District Children's Work Committee, for example, invited the writer to meet with them to report on the teacher survey. In the process of the discussion, the plan for pastor-led teacher-training was presented and was well received. One result of this meeting was the request by the committee for a portion of their budget to be used to give help and information to pastors regarding their part in teacher-training, and to set as one of their goals the encouragement of pastors in leading teacher-training.

Local church Christian education leaders could be encouraged to take the initiative in inaugurating a plan for pastor-led teacher-training. An example of this was the request by the Pasadena District in a training event for local church leaders, to include among the classes offered an introduction to this pastor-led teacher-training program.

Pastors need to be informed of the possibilities of this plan. This could be done through District meetings for pastors, District and Conference committees sending material to pastors, or meetings of pastors for the specific purpose of giving training in ways of pastor-led teacher-training. An example of this was the comment by Paul Irwin of the School of Theology at Claremont regarding two specific ways in which the model described in this paper might be introduced to pastors: "I do hope you will develop the outline you present in your paper. It would serve your teaching purposes and provide a library resource for



the beginning student. If I am asked to offer another course, either at the School or in one of the Districts, I think I shall use your model, providing published curriculum material and doing precisely what you have done."<sup>1</sup> Thus, both as a resource for the beginning seminary student and as a model for pastors of local churches, the plan can be presented to those who might use it in the local church.

### CONCLUSION

This study represents the culmination of considerable interest and study on the part of the writer over a period of the past three years while working on this project. A sense of personal need for a greater biblical understanding has led to more concentrated study especially in the field of the Old Testament, and a growing awareness of the need for a greater biblical understanding on the part of all persons in the local church, as well as the larger community. The need for much improved teacher-training in the area of biblical understanding has led to an investigation of the elements necessary in this training and the development of a plan which brings together the elements of emphasis on content, use of curriculum material, use of form-critical methods, dialogic educational method, local church setting, and the pastor as leader.

This particular model has its strengths and weaknesses. The experimental uses of the model have left much to be desired. Much refinement and practice are necessary. However, the study leads to the conclusion that the basic elements in the model are of value and useful and if included in some form of pastor-led teacher-training, that

---

<sup>1</sup>Paul Irwin, unpublished personal correspondence.

training would meet much of the needs expressed at the beginning of this study. If, as Dorothy Jean Furnish says, "Something is wrong with the way the Bible has been taught to children,"<sup>2</sup> then it may also be true that something is wrong with the way teachers are being taught, especially in regard to the Bible. The basic ideas and elements described in this study, if put into practice in local churches, may lead to a much greater biblical understanding on the part of teachers as well as students. The Divine-human encounter to which the Bible gives witness can then become more than an experience of the past and the Living God will become known and experienced in contemporary life and the Living Word will be perceived to be dwelling among us even in this day.

When Asa became king, the prophet Azariah went out to meet him and said: "For a long time Israel was without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without the law."<sup>3</sup> In our day may more and more pastors in local churches discover that the people of God desperately need "teaching priests."

---

<sup>2</sup>Dorothy Jean Furnish, Exploring the Bible with Children (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1975), p. 11.

<sup>3</sup>II Chronicles 15:3.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

## BOOKS

- Ackroyd, Peter. The First Book of Samuel (Cambridge Bible Commentary)  
Cambridge: University Press, 1971.
- Anderson, Bernhard. The Unfolding Drama of the Bible. New York:  
Association Press, 1957.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Understanding the Old Testament. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-  
Hall, 1957.
- Baillie, John. The Idea of Revelation in Recent Thought. New York:  
Columbia University press, 1956.
- Bentzen, Aage. Introduction to the Old Testament, 2d ed. Copenhagen:  
Gad, 1952.
- Blair, Edward P. The Bible and You. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1953.
- Boer, P. A. H. de. Research into the Text of I Samuel I-XVI. Amsterdam:  
Paris, 1938.
- Bowman, Locke. Straight Talk About Teaching in Today's Church.  
Philadelphia: Geneva Press, 1967.
- Bright, John. A History of Israel. Philadelphia: Westminster Press,  
1972.
- Buber, Martin. Between Man and Man. Boston: Beacon Press, 1955.
- Budde, Karl. Die Bucher Richter und Samuel. Giessen: Ricker, 1890.
- Burgess, Harold William. An Invitation to Religious Education.  
Mishawaka, IN: Religious Education Press, 1975.
- Caird, George B. "The First and Second Books of Samuel," in The  
Interpreter's Bible. New York: Abingdon Press, 1953. II, 856.
- Campbell, D. The Task of Christian Education. Philadelphia:  
Westminster Press, 1955.
- Campbell, Antony F. The Ark Narrative. Missoula, MT: Scholar's  
Press, 1975.
- Dodd, C. H. The Bible Today. London: Cambridge University Press,  
1946.
- Driver, S. R. Notes on the Hebrew Text and Topography of the Books  
of Samuel, 2d ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913.

- Eastman, Frances. "Teaching the Bible to Children," in The Interpreter's One Volume Commentary on the Bible. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1971. p. 1259.
- Edwards, Mary Alice Douty. Leadership Development and the Workers' Conference. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1967.
- Eissfeldt, Otto. Die Komposition der Samuelisbücher. Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1931.
- Fohrer, Georg. Introduction to the Old Testament, trans. by David E. Green. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1968.
- Furnish, Dorothy Jean. Exploring the Bible with Children. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1975.
- Goldman, Ronald. Readiness for Religion. New York: Seabury Press, 1968.
- Griggs, Donald L. Teaching Teachers to Teach. Livermore, CA: Griggs Educational Service, 1974.
- Gunkel, Hermann. "Fundamental Problems of Hebrew Literary History," in What Remains of the Old Testament, trans. by A. K. Dallas. New York: Macmillan, 1928.
- Hanson, Richard. "Biblical Theology," in Richard Olson (ed.) The Pastor's Role in Educational Ministry. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974.
- Harmon, Nolan B. Understanding the Methodist Church. Nashville: Methodist Publishing House, 1945.
- Henry, Carl F. H. "Restoring the Whole Word for the Whole Community," in James Michael Lee (ed.) The Religious Education We Need. Mishawaka, IN: Religious Education Press, 1977.
- Hertzberg, Hans. I and II Samuel, trans. by J. S. Bowden. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964.
- Jungmann, Josef. Die Frohbotschaft und unsere Glaubensverkündigung, trans. by William Huesman. New York: Sadlier, 1962.
- Kirkpatrick, A. F. First Book of Samuel (Cambridge Bible Commentary) Cambridge: University Press, 1894.
- Knierim, Rolf. "The Messianic Concept in The First Book of Samuel," in F. Thomas Trotter (ed.) Jesus and the Historian. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1968.

- Knopf, Gerald. "The Churches Expect a Teaching Ministry," in Nathaniel F. Forsyth (ed.) The Minister and Christian Nurture. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1958.
- Koch, Klaus. The Book of Books. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1968.
- \_\_\_\_\_. The Growth of the Biblical Tradition. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969.
- Lynn, Robert Wood, and Elliott Wright. The Big Little School: Sunday Child of American Protestantism. New York: Harper & Row, 1971.
- MacQuarrie, John. Principles of Christian Theology. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1966.
- McKane, William. I and II Samuel. London: SCM Press, 1963.
- Meyer, Henry H. "The Place of the Bible in Religious Education," in Abingdon Bible Commentary. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1929.
- Miller, Randolph Crump. Biblical Theology and Christian Education. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1956.
- Minear, Paul. Eyes of Faith. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1946.
- Moran, Gabriel. Visions and Tactics: Toward an Adult Church. New York: Herder and Herder, 1970.
- Moule, C. F. D. "The Intention of the Evangelists," in A. J. B. Higgins (ed.) New Testament Essays. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1959.
- Noth, Martin. The History of Israel, 2d ed. London: Black, 1960.
- Nouwen, Henri J. M. Creative Ministry. Garden City: Doubleday, 1971.
- Person, Peter P. The Minister in Christian Education. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1960.
- Rad, Gerhard von. Old Testament Theology, trans. by D. M. G. Stalker. 2 vols. Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1962.
- Rendtorff, Rolf. "Beobachtungen zur altisraelitischen Geschichtsschreibung anhand der Geschichte vom Aufstieg Davids," in Hans Walter Wolff (ed.) Probleme biblischer Theologie. Munich: Kaiser, 1971.
- Robinson, James M. Trajectories Through Early Christianity. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969.
- Rood, Wayne R. On Nurturing Christians. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1972.

- Rowley, H. H. The Relevance of the Bible. New York: Macmillan, 1944.
- Sherrill, Lewis. The Gift of Power. New York: Macmillan, 1955.
- Smart, James. The Strange Silence of the Bible in the Church: A Study in Hermeneutics. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1970.
- \_\_\_\_\_. The Teaching Ministry of the Church. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1954.
- \_\_\_\_\_. What a Man Can Believe. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1943.
- Smith, Henry Preserved. A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Samuel (International Critical Commentary) New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899.
- Smither, Ethel L. Children and the Bible. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1960.
- The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church Nashville: United Methodist Publishing House, 1976.
- Tillich, Paul. Systematic Theology, 3 vols. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1951.
- Toynbee, Arnold. A Study of History, abridgement of vols. I-VI by D. C. Sommervell. New York: Oxford University Press, 1947.
- Tucker, Gene M. Form Criticism of the Old Testament. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971.
- Walker, Williston. A History of the Christian Church. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951. Rev. ed. 1959.
- Westerhoff, John H., III. Values for Tomorrow's Children. Philadelphia: Pilgrim Press, 1970.
- Wyckoff, D. Campbell. The Task of Christian Education. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1955.

## PERIODICALS

- Cross, Frank Moore. "A Report on the Biblical Fragments of Cave Four in Wadi Qumran," American School of Oriental Research CXLI (1956), 12.
- De Vries, Simon J. "David's Victory Over the Philistine as Saga and as Legend," Journal of Biblical Literature, XCII (1973), 23-36.
- Herron, Bud. "Where Have All the Children Gone?" Circuit West, V:37 (August 26, 1977), 3.
- Hoffner, Harry A. "A Hittite Analogue to the David and Goliath Contest of Champions," Catholic Bible Quarterly, XXX (1968), 220-225.
- Morgenstern, Julian. "David and Jonathan," Journal of Biblical Literature, LXXIII (1959), 322-325.
- Rood, Wayne. "The Bible Read-Through," Pacific School of Religion Bulletin, LV: 4 (October 1977), 4.
- Thompson, J. A. "The Significance of the Verb Love in the David-Jonathan Narratives in I Samuel," Vetus Testamentum, XXIV (1974), 334-338.

## CURRICULUM MATERIAL

- Dotts, Maryann J. "Covenants: Old and New," revision of curriculum by David and Martha Ash. Older Elementary Guidebook, III, 1; and Older Elementary Student Book, III,1. Nashville: Graded Press, 1977.
- Perkins, Norma Jean. "Giving Thanks to God," Younger Elementary Children's Book, II,1. Nashville: Graded Press, 1977.

## UNPUBLISHED WORKS

- Batoon, Reuben Rivera. "The Training of Church School Teachers: Current Practices in the United Presbyterian Synod of Southern California, With Workshop Designs for Leadership Development." Unpublished Rel. D. dissertation, School of Theology at Claremont, 1973.
- Ford, Richard. "A Comparative Study of the Experiential Approach to Religious Education and Some Aspects of Existentialism." Unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, University of Southern California, 1957.



Irwin, Paul. "About Thursday." Unpublished, mimeographed.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Bible and Contemporary Theological Thought." Unpublished, mimeographed.

\_\_\_\_\_. Unpublished class notes, January 1976.

\_\_\_\_\_. Personal correspondence, March 20, 1976.

Jennings, Luther B. Personal interviews. Occidental College, Los Angeles, California, 1976 and 1977.

McCarthy, D. J. "Notes on Narrative Genres," from the files of the Old Testament Form Critical Project, School of Theology at Claremont, mimeographed.

#### PAMPHLETS

United Methodist Church, Office of Interpretive Services. "About United Methodist Curriculum Resources for Children."

\_\_\_\_\_. "Discovering Ways the Bible is Used."

\_\_\_\_\_. "Styles of Teaching and Biblical Content."

**APPENDIX**

## TEACHER TRAINING SURVEY

November, 1977

The following will be most helpful to those who are planning teacher training opportunities in the District and the local church. Your time and careful answers are appreciated.

## I. PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. What is your position in Christian Education in the local church or district: Teacher \_\_, Team teacher \_\_, Assistant \_\_, Coordinator \_\_, Superintendent \_\_, Ed. Commission member \_\_, Officer \_\_, Other \_\_
2. What level do you work with in the local church: Nursery \_\_, kg. \_\_, Young elementary (gr. 1,2,3) \_\_, Middle \_\_ Older \_\_
3. How long have you been teaching/working in the Church School? \_\_
4. Have you ever been a professional school teacher? \_\_

## II. TRAINING RECEIVED

Indicate teacher training you have received from the list below, and evaluate the training on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being most helpful and 5 least helpful. If you have not been involved in some of the experiences listed below, leave the line blank.

	1	2	3	4	5
District Curriculum overview					
Lab school					
District Workshop					
Local church workers conference					
Working with another teacher					
Working under supervision					
Conference with pastor or superintendent					
Teacher training led by the pastor					
Bible study groups in the church					
Other study groups in the church					
Personal study					
Formal courses in college or seminary					
Training for working with non-church groups					
Others					

### III. ROLE OF THE PASTOR

How has your pastor helped in teacher training? Indicate help received and evaluate in the same manner as you did in Item II.

	1	2	3	4	5
Sermons					
Personal conversations					
Pastor teaching Bible study groups					
Example of pastor teaching classes					
Pastor giving Biblical background in a teacher training session					
Pastor giving instruction in methods					
Pastor giving individual spiritual guidance					

### IV. HELP NEEDED

Where do you need the most help in enabling you to be a better leader in the church school?

	1	2	3	4	5
Understanding children					
Teaching methods					
Discovering resources available					
Biblical background					
Using lesson materials					
Church history					
Understanding United Methodist beliefs					
Individual growth as a person					
How to be effective part of a team					
Other					

### V. SOURCE OF BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING

Where have you received help in understanding and using the Bible for teaching?

	1	2	3	4	5
Adult classes					
Children & youth classes when young					
Sermons					
Small group studies					
Interdenominational study groups					
District & Conference training events					
Formal classes: college or seminary					
Personal study					
Local church teacher training					
Other					

## VI. VIEW OF THE BIBLE

Which statements more closely describe your view of the Bible?  
List in scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being "closest to my view."

	1	2	3	4	5
Every word exactly as God dictated					
Original revelation by God, but distorted by translations					
History of events showing how God acts in history					
Source book to answer life's questions and rules of conduct					
Record of experiences of people with God and their beliefs					
Revelation of nature & will of God through experiences of people					
Book through which God can be known and experienced today					

Please indicate below any ideas or suggestions or needs you have  
regarding teacher training, role of the pastor, and biblical  
training.